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Dungeons & Dragons

A 7th Level Adventure

EBERRON

Voyage of the Golden Dragon™

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VOYAGE OF THE GOLDEN DRAGON™

A 7th-Level Adventure

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Introduction

This adventure takes a group of four 7th-level characters on board Khorvaire's largest airship, both for its launch party and on its first voyage to the mysterious continent of Xen'drik. This trip is no pleasure cruise, however, for the PCs quickly find themselves caught up in hijacking plots, magical sabotage, the dark ambition of a Lhazaar prince, murder, political mayhem, and more.

To play this adventure, you need the *Player's Handbook (PH)*, *Dungeon Master's Guide (DMG)*, *Monster Manual (MM)*, and the *Eberron Campaign Setting (ECS)*.

Adventure Background

Voyage of the Golden Dragon consists of four adventures in one. Each takes place on the illustrious cruise airship or at its destination in Xen'drik. Because the adventures are written in succession, they can be run as a single continuing mission.

In 993 YK, the Brelish military commissioned a joint endeavor of House Lyrandar, House Medani, and the royal magewrights. Well funded by King Boranel's coffers, the *Golden Dragon* was to be the crown jewel of Breland's armada, and the flagship for a new fleet of airships unlike anything Khorvaire had seen before.

The mammoth project labored on for three years, plagued by setbacks and constant delays. Even before the *Golden Dragon*'s complicated elemental binding processes were perfected, the Last War was over. The Treaty of Thronehold brought with it new opportunities and prosperity, however. The mighty airship's half-constructed skeleton wallowed in a private Lyrandar dock in Sharn for another year before a concern of private investors doled out a tidy sum to the Brelish crown to acquire it. Now, the *Golden Dragon* is about to embark on a different role in the skies. As a luxury cruise airship, it will tour Khorvaire's farthest reaches and beyond.

The crew of the Golden Dragon

Crew of the Golden Dragon

Captain Alastair d'Lyrandar: Commanding officer of the *Golden Dragon*, Alastair is a high-ranking member of House Lyrandar whose duty is to his ship, crew, and passengers above all else. Alastair's career has been plagued with foul luck in the past, and several vessels have suffered accidents under his command. The *Dragon* is Alastair's first big commission, and he is determined to have a smooth inaugural voyage.

Lieutenant Mazzia d'Lyrandar: First mate aboard the *Dragon,* and an accomplished airship sailor. She is deeply in love with the ship's bosun, Velgram (see below), though professionalism keeps her from acting on her feelings.

Velgram Linntorm: The ship's bosun is a towering half-orc whose reputation for joviality and kindness is well known.

Manten Dramgrin: Chief artificer of the *Golden Dragon*, this taciturn dwarf is aggravated by the presence of Torren Blackfingers on the airship. Dramgrin has a deep appreciation for music and is often found in his stateroom practicing the violin.

Torren Blackfingers: A skilled artificer who has arranged access to the ship's laboratory as a condition of long-term passage on the *Dragon*.

Jaeden Kovane: Ship's cook, and a surly one at that. Kovane is actually an undercover agent of the King's Citadel of Breland. He keeps tabs on the *Golden Dragon* for the Brelish crown.

KalibarJenks: This shifty halfling runs the House of Chance, the airship's onboard gambling den and lounge. Kalibar is another secret servant of Breland, a member of the King's Dark Lanterns who poses as a rapscallion to observe and report on criminal activities across Khorvaire.

Zan: This elf monk offers massage and meditation training to the *Dragon*'s passengers. Zan is actually a changeling, on the run from a wide-reaching Sharn thieves guild (if you use the *Sharn: City of Towers* supplement, Zan is a former member of the Tyrants).

Adventure Synopsis

In Part One of this adventure, a sea baron named Paldrith Malinko has fixed the *Dragon* with an envious eye. A particularly ambitious pirate of the Lhazaar Principalities, Malinko has planned his own gigantic airship, the *Cloud Dancer*. When he learns that the more impressive *Golden Dragon* project has been renewed, Malinko sets a plan in motion to destroy the ship, ruining its owners and leaving his own vessel to control the skies.

A scarred saboteur named Telgin Char and his warforged companion Kray are charged with carrying out Malinko's insidious mission. During the vessel's christening party atop Lyrandar Tower in Sharn, Telgin plants an arcane bomb in the airship's water elemental chamber with the help of monstrous thugs purchased with Lhazaar gold. The bomb will create a *banishment* effect within the vessel's elemental workings, causing the *Golden Dragon* to come crashing down.

Not knowing Telgin's plan, his hired thugs believe the bomb to simply be the threat that allows them to hold the airship for ransom. The PCs must defeat the hostage-takers and disable the bomb before the *Golden Dragon*'s first trip becomes a death drop onto the innocent citizens of Sharn below.

In Part Two, Paldrith Malinko takes matters into his own hands. Purchasing passage on the *Dragon*'s maiden voyage to Xen'drik, the Lhazaar pirate plans to disable the ship with a lethal "accident" in the vessel's artificer's lab. To complicate matters, dignitaries of the Five Nations on board for this hallmark voyage chafe in each other's company. Gunter Hegerin, an Emerald Claw necromancer posing as secretary to the Karrnathi ambassador, wants to reignite war between Thrane and Karrnath. Meanwhile, Kalibar Jenks steals secret orders intended for House Orien's enclave in Stormreach, attempting to replace the orders with forgeries. The PCs must unravel three plots and avert general mayhem during the voyage.

The *Golden Dragon* arrives at Stormreach at the outset of Part Three. Halas Martain, an unscrupulous treasure hunter and an expert on all things Xen'drik, hires the PCs to accompany him to the ruins of a giant citadel south of Stormreach. There, the PCs cross paths again with Gunter Hegerin as the necromancer animates an army of undead giants.

In Part Four, the *Golden Dragon* prepares to return to Breland. However, Zolanta Vaazir, a Xen'drik drow druid outraged by foreign incursions in her land, seizes the *Dragon* with the unwitting help of a Morgrave scholar returning to Khorvaire. Faced with an aerial assault by a fearsome white dragon and drow on winged dinosaurs, the PCs must repel the attack before the ship is destroyed.

The Golden Dragon

This detailed breakdown of the ship and its various sections is written as if the PCs are entering them on the night of the christening party in Part One of this adventure. Adjust them accordingly if the characters see them for the first time at a later date.

Light: *Everbright lanterns* burn in all areas of the ship. Those in the bridge and any private spaces (staterooms, crew's quarters, and so on) can be covered, but all other interior lights burn brightly day and night. The main deck, quarterdeck, and observation platform are only dimly lit at night.

Sound: Shipboard sounds, passenger and crew's voices (automatic).

Reactions: The *Dragon*'s crew members have friendly or helpful attitudes to passengers, including PCs. The Medani sentries are indifferent while the *Dragon* is in Sharn, but become unfriendly for the voyage to Xen'drik. Other NPCs react according to their descriptions and the encounter text.

The first time the PCs catch sight of the *Golden Dragon,* read or paraphrase the following:

A floating airship fills the night sky, suspended 200 feet off the ground alongside Lyrandar Tower. The housings for not one but two elemental rings surround the giant vessel—one blazing and crackling with flame, the other dormant and dark. The ship herself is near 200 feet long and over 60 feet across at her thickest. The Sovereign Host alone knows what device or artifice could keep such a behemoth aloft. Soarwood tinged with gold and carved with scale and talon motifs makes up her body. Her front bow is rendered into an enormous dragon's head with fanged mouth gaping wide.

The *Golden Dragon* outclasses any other airship to date in more than just size. The vessel is outfitted with a fire elemental ring like many others, but also bears a secondary ring. Unlike a normal airship (which floats not because of elemental power but from its lighter-than-air soarwood hull), the *Dragon*'s sheer size requires both rings to provide propulsion and lift, using unique hybrid elemental design techniques. (This is what will allow the airship to potentially be brought down by Telgin Char's plot. See area 8 on page 5 and the Banishment Bomb on page 12 for details.)

The secondary ring burns even while the *Dragon* is docked, also unlike most airships. Though it always maintains a safe distance from the ship, the secondary ring is deployed from retractable struts so as not to damage the tower. As normal, any creature or object touching the elemental bound into either ring takes 3d8 points of fire damage.

Originally outfitted for warfare, the *Golden Dragon* retains some military features. At any time, the secondary ring can be commanded by the captain or the first mate to manifest part of itself on the deck in the form of a greater fire elemental (*MM* 99). The order and location is given from the bridge as a free action; the ship then manifests the elemental on deck as a full-round action. The elemental can be commanded to return to the secondary ring as a full-round action. While within the ring of fire, the creature gains fast healing 5.

The *Golden Dragon* contains a vault where passengers can store their valuables. The vault can be sealed or opened (either from the bridge or from within the cargo bay) by the captain or the first mate. Originally designed as a brig for particularly dangerous prisoners, the vault possesses an *antimagic field* effect that can be activated or deactivated by anyone on the bridge, or from the cargo bay by the captain or the first mate.

This luxury cruise liner offers high-quality dining, entertainment, and gambling at Kalibar Jenk's House of Chance. While traveling to Xen'drik or any other exotic locale, a deep soothing massage or meditation training are available in Serenity above the Clouds, a relaxation spa run by Zan. Passengers on the *Golden Dragon* pay a premium price for its luxury, however. Regular travel costs 2 gp per mile for excursions of a single day or less. For longer trips, passengers pay that rate plus an additional 50 gp per day for a stateroom.

The *Dragon* also sports a rather elaborate and well-equipped laboratory used by the chief artificer (and more often by Torren Blackfingers). Any interested group of PCs can rent the lab for 100 gp per day.

Areas of the ship normally accessible only to the crew (the bridge, the laboratory, and the water elemental chamber) are kept locked at all times. The captain, first mate, bosun, and chief artificer Dramgrin carry the only keys to these areas. The gnome artificer Torren Blackfingers has a key that opens only the laboratory.

1. MAIN DECK

Brass railings wrought into twisting dragons swallowing each other's tails surround the area above deck. This open-air space offers a splendid view of swirling clouds and a dizzying tapestry of dancing stars.

Passengers board the *Golden Dragon* by any of four retractable ramps extending from the docking tower to the main deck. The observation deck and forecastle are both accessible by brass stairwells.

Two accessways behind the bridge (marked "Crew Only") run from the main deck through the storage chambers (area 15) and down to the cargo bay (area 17). Most passengers take the spiral staircase amidships when moving between decks.

2. BRIDGE

From this area, Captain Alastair d'Lyrandar pilots the *Dragon* and issues commands to the crew member at the helm. The doors to this area are kept locked at all times (Open Lock DC 30, Strength DC 18). Only the captain, first mate, and bosun have keys. Regular crew or anyone else seeking access must normally be admitted by a character already inside.

In addition to the *Dragon*'s course, speed, and heading, a number of shipboard functions are controlled from here (all are standard actions). Anyone on the bridge can open the bay doors to area 18 and deploy or recall the soarwood lifeboats there. Another control can activate or deactivate the *antimagic field* in the vault (area 19). Crew members of the *Dragon* can perform these tasks automatically. Anyone else must make a DC 15 Profession (sailor) check or a DC 20 Disable Device check.

In addition, the captain and first mate alone can open and close the vault in area 19, can manifest a greater

fire elemental from the secondary ring (see page 4), and can transfer control of the *Golden Dragon* between the bridge and the quarterdeck above (area 5).

The two Khyber dragonshards that bind the *Dragon*'s fire elementals reside in a hidden housing chamber beneath the floor of the bridge (Search DC 25 to find). The housing chamber is sealed with an *arcane lock* (CL 12th). The *Dragon*'s complex elemental binding system makes its bridge more complicated than that of a standard airship, and several secondary dragonshards are fitted directly into the controls themselves.

3. Laboratory

The door to this area is kept locked at all times (Open Lock DC 30, Strength DC 18). The captain, first mate, bosun, and both artificers (Dramgrin and Torren Blackfingers) have keys.

Several polished steel tables stand in this spacious room. Along all the walls, counters are cluttered with beakers filled with multicolored fluids, some of which froth and bubble. Metal instruments and various runestones and tomes lay upon some of the tables, and hollowed molds of various shapes are wrought into others.

This well-equipped laboratory is state-of-the-art. Any spellcaster using the laboratory gains a +4 bonus on any Use Magic Device check or any Craft check for crafting items.

4. Luxury Suite

This impressive suite is for rent at a cost of 100 gp per day. It is currently occupied by Torren Blackfingers (see page 28). The door to this area is kept locked at all times (Open Lock DC 30, Strength DC 18). Blackfingers, the captain, and the first mate have keys.

An enormous bed occupies the north wall of this suite, covered with satin sheets and tasseled pillows. The bar is filled with complimentary chocolates, fine vintage wines, and pure spring water bottled in the Eldeen Reaches. Plush reading chairs, an oak table, and a large bathroom filled with all imaginable amenities complete the suite's furnishings.

The *Dragon*'s original design as a warship means that the luxury suite is not in the most ideal position below the laboratory, and the captain is happy to have Torren Blackfingers renting it for the long term. Torren is a wealthy gnome, but should he be persuaded to choose other quarters, the PCs might be lucky enough to cruise in decadent style during their journey. (At least, they can enjoy it until the forecastle explodes; see Malinko's Revenge, page 18.)

5. Quarterdeck

This small deck above the bridge provides an excellent view of the sky. A secondary helm can be used to pilot the ship if the captain or first mate transfer control from the bridge. Success on a DC 25 Disable Device check allows someone to lock the helm controls on the quarterdeck.

Two House Medani sentries stand guard here at all times.

Medani Sentries (2): hp 26 each; *ECS* 235.

6. Observation Deck

This area is used by the crew to study star charts, but is also open to passengers seeking an exquisite view of the sky, or wishing to engage in cloud fishing. Three harpoon guns on this elevated platform were originally intended to defend the *Golden Dragon* from attack, but they have now been converted into recreational sporting weapons for use against flying creatures.

These harpoon guns are considered exotic weapons and impose the normal –4 penalty on attack rolls for anyone not proficient in their use. They have a range increment of 60 feet and a maximum range of 180 feet. Each fires a large harpoon with magically generated webbing attached. The harpoon strikes for 2d6 points of damage, and the webbing immediately grapples a target the harpoon hits (grapple modifier = wielder's base attack bonus + 4 for the weapon's effective Strength of 18). A grappled creature can be reeled in at a rate of 30 feet per round.

7. Reception Hall

This is the primary dining area on the *Golden Dragon*, where passengers are treated to Jaeden Kovane's specialties.

This enormous chamber is filled with ornately carved tables and chairs of burnished mahogany. Curtains of striking velvet drape from arches above, and fine tapestries adorn the walls.

The reception hall is a primary social nexus on the *Dragon*, and many interactions occur here. Passengers break their fast in this chamber and dine here in the evenings as well.

8. Staterooms

These pleasant quarters are available to the *Golden Dragon*'s passengers for an additional 50 gp per day. Stateroom doors are normally locked (Open Lock DC 30, Strength DC 18). Each passenger has a key that opens only his or her stateroom, and the captain and first mate each have a master key that will open any stateroom door.

Each stateroom has two comfortable beds and a separate bath. Portholes offer a clear view of the sky beyond.

9. House of Chance

Kalibar Jenks' House of Chance offers passengers on the *Dragon* a place to unwind and try their hand at cards, dragonwheel, three-dragon ante, and other games of fortune.

This dimly lit chamber is alive with voices as guests crowd around various tables hurling dice or slapping down gold bars and coins. On one wall, a huge wheel in the shape of a dragon chasing its own tail spins incessantly, its glamered scales casting multicolored light. Three elf women, each surpassing the next in beauty, sing from the stage, and the bar is tended by a portly halfling with a wide smile. Goblins in green tailed surcoats scamper about, bringing patrons their beverages and exchanging currency.

The wily Jenks makes a hefty profit from his games, but the money is a side benefit—his more important job is as a loyal Brelish agent. The halfling carries out the crown's orders and ferrets out information on various criminal organizations across Khorvaire for the King's Dark Lanterns.

The three elf bards in his retinue are sisters who have left House Phiarlan and now serve Breland without question. The singers aid Jenks in entertaining the subjects of his investigations and also defend the halfling if necessary. They are in this area from noon until 2 A.M. After that, Tarla and Nicolette are asleep in one of the staterooms. Desrida and Jenks have been carrying on a torrid love affair for some time (though her sisters do not approve). She sleeps with Jenks in his private office (area 10).

Desrida, Tarla, and Nicolette: hp 22, 21, 18; *ECS* 236 (typical House Phiarlan entertainer).

Kalibar Jenks: hp 25; see page 31.

10. PRIVATE OFFICE

This small office is filled with a cozy bunk for two, a large oak trunk, and a writing desk. Jenks keeps his reports on suspected enemies of Breland in a concealed drawer in his desk (Search DC 25 to locate), along with his forger's inks, brushes, wax stamps, and carving tools. His locked trunk contains clothing, his lucky dice, a pouch with 20 gp, and a masterwork silver dagger.

Trunk: hp 30, hardness 10, break DC 20, Open Lock DC 20.

11. KITCHEN

This large kitchen is where Jaeden Kovane and his staff prepare sumptuous repasts for the *Golden Dragon*'s passengers.

The kitchen is powered by the same fire elementals that drive the ship, and it is outfitted with the finest equipment. Though one might expect Kovane to be quite content, his bitter temper is legendary among the other cooks, who avoid his corner of the kitchen like the plague.

Concealed among its extracts and spices, Kovane's personal spike rack contains 3 *potions of mage armor*, 2 *potions of bull's strength*, 2 *potions of cat's grace*, 4 *potions of cure serious wounds*, 1 *potion of shield of faith (+4)*, and 2 doses each of *dust of appearance, dust of disappearance*, and *dust of illusion*.

The kitchen dog, Lucius, is Kovane's animal companion and always accompanies him.

Jaeden Kovane: hp 32; see page 31.

Lucius: hp 19; see page 31.

12. WATER ELEMENTAL CHAMBER

Much of the *Golden Dragon*'s custom bound-elemental technology is contained in this chamber. The door to this area is kept locked at all times (Open Lock DC 30, Strength DC 18). Only the captain, the first mate, and the bosun have keys.

Aura: Moderate conjuration from the water elemental's sphere.

Percussive bursts of steam echo through a twisting maze of piping, and a heavy mist hangs in the air. Centrally located in this chamber is a large steel sphere covered in arcane runes. A dragonshard at the sphere's top pulses with blue light.

To create the power needed to drive an airship of its size, the *Dragon*'s builders developed new processes by which the power of its bound fire elementals could be augmented and amplified by the presence of a bound water elemental. This chamber holds a secondary elemental housing chamber (the sphere) and the pipes through which superheated steam flows.

Anyone adjacent to the piping can peer through spaces in the metal mesh or fire a small weapon (such as a light crossbow or shortbow) at targets beyond. The piping provides cover (+4 to AC) to creatures on opposite sides of it.

13. CREW'S MESS

Several tables fill this simple room. The mess is where the crew (including the bosun, chief artificer, Medani sentries, Jovane, and Zan) take their meals.

14. CREW QUARTERS

This chamber is filled with nine double bunks, with a number of small lock boxes scattered throughout. Unless they have coins burning holes in their pockets (in which case they can usually be found at the House of Chance), the *Dragon*'s crew members and House Medani sentries sleep and spend most of their downtime here. The average lock box contains personal items (small family pictures, the odd carved trinket, letters, and so on) as well as 2d6 gp.

Medani Sentries: hp 26 each; *ECS* 235.

Lock Box: hp 15, hardness 10, break DC 18, Open Lock DC 15.

15. STORAGE

These large chambers are filled with extra blankets, food supplies, emergency water rations, tools and other amenities. Steel lockboxes contain a total of ten masterwork longswords and ten masterwork heavy crossbows with 100 bolts each.

Steel Lock Boxes: hp 50, hardness 15, break DC 25, Open Lock DC 20.

16. SERENITY ABOVE THE CLOUDS

This is Zan's place of business, where he deals relaxation, massage, and meditation to the *Dragon*'s passengers.

The serene lilt of a flute soothes the spirit as the scent of jasmine-flower incense floats on the air. Woven bamboo mats and cushions line the floor of this elegantly decorated studio. Above a cushioned massage table, arcane designs and tapestries hang from the walls.

Zan's massages are legendary among Sharn's elite, and the elf speaks to any who ask about how he is attempting to expand his clientele and study new meditation and martial techniques across Khorvaire. In truth, Zan is no elf at all, but a changeling on the run from criminal interests in Sharn.

Zan: hp 46; see page 28.

17. CARGO BAY

This is where the majority of the *Golden Dragon*'s cargo is stored. Passengers can haul freight on the airship for a base price of 1 gp per cubic foot per day of travel. In the floor of the bay, trapdoors were originally built to allow the airship to drop troops or elemental-powered carts. The seam of the doors has been concealed (Search DC 25), and they can only be opened or closed from the bridge.

The cargo bay can also be reached through a large portal at the rear of the vessel, up a retractable ramp. This massive door can be opened or closed only from the bridge, and it is used to load cargo when the ship is docked. The minotaurs from Monsters Belowdecks (see page 9) are bringing crates up this ramp to this area in Part One.

One Medani guard stands watch at the base of the spiral staircase at all times. The accessways do not warrant additional guards, since someone using them must pass through either the Medani quarters or the crew mess to reach the cargo bay.

Medani Sentry: hp 26; *ECS* 235.

18. SKIFF BAY

Five soarwood air skiffs are ready for deployment in each of these bays. Large hatches on the exterior walls can be opened from the bridge or from this area. The skiffs comfortably seat up to six passengers each, and are able to match speed with the *Golden Dragon* if need be. Originally designed as dual-purpose emergency escape vehicles and small attack vessels, the skiffs can be rented with the captain's permission for 150 gp per day. If a return beacon on the bridge is activated, the skiffs are magically commanded to return to the *Dragon* immediately and regardless of distance (as long as the skiff and the airship are on the same plane).

19. VAULT

This large cell with 6-inch-thick steel walls was designed as a brig where dangerous captives of the *Dragon* could be incarcerated. Now it serves as a secured vault for the most valuable possessions of the airship's guests.

The vault door is solid steel and is outfitted with a state-of-the-art locking mechanism. When it served as a brig, the vault was equipped with an *antimagic field* to hold prisoners with spell-like or supernatural abilities. The vault can be opened only by the captain or the first mate, either from the bridge (see area 2) or from within the cargo bay. The vault's *antimagic field* can be activated or deactivated by anyone on the bridge, or from the cargo bay by the captain or the first mate.

Vault Door: hp 240, hardness 20, break DC 45, Open Lock DC 40.

Part One: Dragon's Fall

This adventure begins during the high-society christening party of the *Golden Dragon*. The vessel sits at the airship dock at Lyrandar Tower, and Sharn's finest are on hand to celebrate. While investors and socialites mingle beneath the stars on the main deck and toast the *Dragon* in the reception hall, work crews toil below deck to put the finishing touches on the great airship.

Unbeknownst to the partygoers dancing and dining above, a cabal of dangerous criminals has infiltrated the vessel. A hobgoblin enforcer and his crew of monstrous thugs prepare to seize the ship, announcing that an arcane device has been planted belowdecks to suppress the fire elemental keeping the *Golden Dragon* airborne. They demand ransom, not knowing that their employer (a Lhazaarite sea dog and saboteur) intends to see the *Dragon* fall.

The Villains

Telgin Char: A whip-thin human scarred from battle and numerous artificing accidents, Telgin was condemned to a life sentence in Dreadhold after a short stint with Prince Mika's Cloudreavers ended in his capture. Telgin's brilliant mind found focus in prison, where the Lhazaarite discovered his propensity for manipulation of magic and artifice. He survived by selling his services to fellow inmates in exchange for protection, eventually repairing Kray to serve as his loyal companion. Dreadhold was hell, and Telgin has no doubts that his current employer, Sea Baron Paldrith Malinko, will hurl him back into its dark depths if he does not complete his mission.

Kray: A towering adamantine and ironclad warforged with an enormous clawlike appendage in place of

his right hand. Damaged beyond repair in a sea battle between Cyran naval forces and Lhazaar pirates, Kray ended up in a heap of scrap metal on Dreadhold. Telgin salvaged the warforged and rebuilt him into the powerful juggernaut he is today. Since then, Kray has served Telgin faithfully, and he is more than willing to die for the pirate.

Brimstone Brakker: An imposing red-skinned hobgoblin with flashing fire-red eyes, Brimstone gets his nickname from his penchant for using noxious smokesticks when conducting his violent business. Originally from Darguun, this fearsome hobgoblin has made a name for himself since immigrating to Sharn, and he is wanted by the City Watch for a long list of crimes. He is the leader of the monstrous crew assisting Telgin, though he hates the ugly Lhazaarite. Only the formidable Kray has kept the hobgoblin from braining Telgin thus far. (If you use the *Sharn: City of Towers* supplement in your game, Brakker and his gang belong to the Daask criminal organization.)

Adventure Hooks

Getting the PCs to the christening party of the *Golden Dragon* is all that is necessary to get the adventure started. If the PCs have any connection to House Lyrandar, they are invited to attend. A friend of a PC might pass an invitation on to them as well. Alternatively, use any of the following hooks to get the characters aboard.

Busy Patron: A patron of the PCs is powerful and influential enough to be granted four tickets to the christening party, but cannot attend due to a prior engagement. The tickets are handed off to the PCs so that they can enjoy a night rubbing elbows with Sharn's elite.

Hired Help: The PCs are hired by House Lyrandar to provide security, entertainment, or reliable service at the party. PCs of any class might be engaged to keep watch (perhaps as undercover operatives working alongside uniformed House Medani sentries). Bards or talented sorcerers and wizards (especially illusionists) might be hired to help Desrida, Nicolette, and Tarla entertain the guests. Clerics might be invited to assist in a ceremonial blessing of the vessel at the party's conclusion.

Social Event of the Season: A particularly charming PC might be invited to the exclusive christening party by an interested paramour. This is an interesting way to add an extra complication to the events that follow, because the character must protect his or her companion from harm while contending with hijackers and villains.

The Grand Event

Sharn's finest are out in droves for the first official unveiling of House Lyrandar's best-kept secret. The *Golden Dragon*'s christening has drawn council members, dragonmarked heirs, friends of King Boranel himself, and visiting dignitaries from the Five Nations and beyond. Sharn's Lord Mayor, Cathan ir'Demell (LN male human aristocrat 12), tops the guest list. If you use *Sharn: City of Towers* in your game, feel free to mix any of its notable figures into the celebration. The party is also an excellent opportunity to introduce PCs to prominent figures central to your campaign arc.

The delicious food is catered by the *Dragon*'s own chef, Jaeden Kovane. Wine and spirits are supplied by Sannid's, one of Sharn's finest restaurants. Rousing music from the three lovely ladies of Jenks's House of Chance fills the ship with merriment. The reception hall is packed with guests mingling around the feast tables or whirling across the dance floor. Other guests, the Lord Mayor included, have ascended abovedeck for an unparalleled view of the night sky from the observation platform. More than a few partygoers have gathered in the House of Chance to try their luck.

PCs serving as entertainment are stuck in the reception hall for most of the party. Any characters engaged to wow the crowd with spell or song might find themselves in competition with Desrida, Tarla, and Nicolette. This relationship might burgeon into rivalry, admiration, or attraction as you see fit.

Two dozen Medani sentries (who might not be happy to have adventurer riffraff interfering with their duties) provide security. The sentries' dismissive attitude allows the PCs assigned to the *Dragon* to relax and enjoy the party.

Any PCs hired to perform serving duties no doubt provoke Jaeden Kovane's foul temper, and become the targets of ominous growls from both the master chef and his ferocious hound, Lucius. A PC with quick insight (DC 20 Spot check) might note that Kovane's command of his chopping knives is impressive, lightning-quick, and deadly accurate.

Characters present in the House of Chance during the party can make DC 20 Spot checks to note Kalibar Jenks engaged in hushed conversation with several well-dressed halfings of the Boromar clan—a group with known ties to criminal activity in Sharn. A DC 20 Listen check reveals a few choice tidbits involving Jenks's connections to other criminal networks around Khorvaire.

Captain Alastair d'Lyrandar, dressed to the nines in a windwright captain's uniform and elegant sky-blue cloak, is nearly always surrounded by well-wishers and curious souls. The captain handles himself with dignity and grace, but a DC 20 Sense Motive check detects a case of nerves beneath the half-elf's jocund veneer. Alastair's career thus far has been rocky, and a commission of this size will likely make or break his future in House Lyrandar.

Characters observing or interacting with Lieutenant Mazzia d'Lyrandar sense she is distracted. A DC 20 Spot

check reveals her gaze straying in the bosun's direction. If she notices the PCs watching her, she makes a hurried excuse to leave their company.

Bosun Velgram Linntorm makes himself useful for the duration of the party, helping the servers and responding to any guests' needs. He is quick to attend to any requests with a charming smile that belies his hulking appearance.

For most of the party, Torren Blackfingers and Manten Dramgrin are engaged in a heated debate over alchemical reagents. Allow the PCs to overhear the tension between these two, because Dramgrin provides an excellent red herring in the plot to sabotage the laboratory during Part Two of this adventure.

Allow the PCs to take in the above information, familiarizing themselves with the *Dragon*'s crew and any other NPCs you see fit to include on the guest list. Around midnight, as the party reaches its zenith, Telgin Char's plot to sabotage the airship is set in motion.

MONSTERS BELOWDECKS

During the party, deck three is off limits as laborers load up provisions and supplies for the *Dragon*'s maiden voyage. Any PC who sneaks a peek sees four burly minotaurs dragging heavy wooden crates into the bay. A half-dozen well-armed Medani sentries oversee the operation and keep the loading ramps secure.

The minotaurs are thugs working for Brimstone Brakker. The creatures infiltrated Lyrandar Tower as hired laborers a week ago. Brakker has also managed to smuggle Kray on board inside a large iron cargo crate. It takes three of the minotaurs to drag the container concealing the massive warforged into the bay.

Once the crate is in place, Kray tears his way out through its steel walls with a roar. The unarmed minotaurs feign terror and flee behind crates while the Medani sentries close with the warforged juggernaut. The minotaurs then retrieve battleaxes stored in the other crates, attacking from behind to help Kray overwhelm the sentries. (If one of the PCs is not on hand to see the events in the cargo bay, one badly injured sentry escapes, then makes his way to the upper decks where he can bear witness to the assault.)

In addition to the minotaurs and Kray, a team of eight hobgoblin workers (actually Brakker's thugs) is fixing pipes in the water elemental chamber (area 12). Telgin Char is posing as their crew boss and preparing to activate the *banishment* bomb in the position marked on the steam room battle map (see page 11). Brimstone Brakker leads a crew of eight hobgoblins hammering reinforced wall plates into place in the storage chamber (area 15).

The din in either area might be noted by any PC in the reception hall or on the main deck near the ladders descending to area 15 (Listen DC 12). The workers are all carrying forged identification papers of excellent quality (Forgery DC 19 to detect). Aside from Telgin Char's toolbox (it has a false bottom beneath which the bomb components are stored; Search DC 20 to notice), the workers carry no weapons or gear not appropriate to their cover jobs.

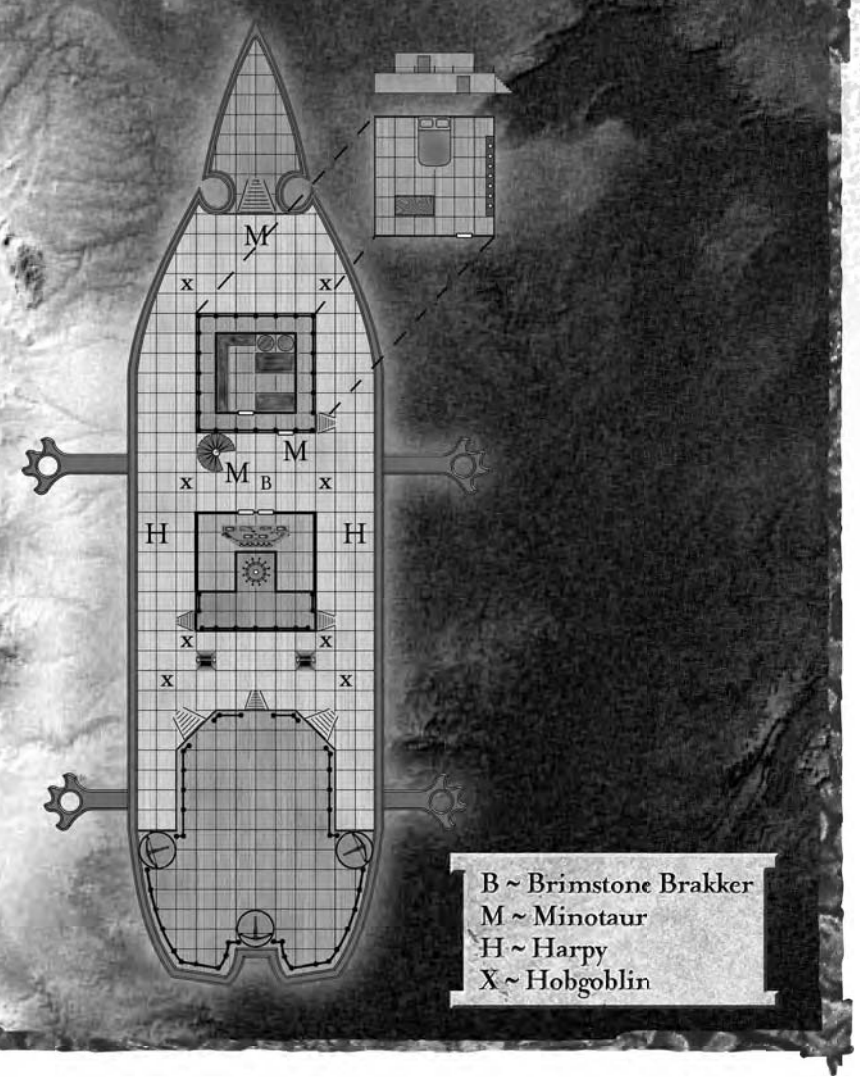
TAKING THE DRAGON (EL 10)

At midnight, the minotaurs ascend to area 15 with crates full of armor and weapons for the hobgoblins, Brakker, and Telgin, who immediately arm themselves and overrun the vessel.

Reaction: All hijackers and saboteurs have a hostile reaction. Even when Brakker comes to understand that Telgin Char is double-crossing him, he and his gang will fight rather than parlay.

The Situation: Brimstone Brakker casts *mage armor* on himself and takes three of the minotaurs and eight of the hobgoblins to storm the reception hall. Brakker hurls a thunderstone against the far wall to get the crowd's attention, then orders everyone down on the floor. His gang grabs hostages immediately, threatening to kill them if the guests do not follow their orders. Take this opportunity to grab the player characters' dates, patrons, or other prominent figures on the guest list.

Telgin Char and Kray



After his thugs force the guests in the House of Chance into the reception hall, Brakker employs his considerable powers of persuasion on the crowd, intimidating anyone who seems edgy enough to act against him. Once the reception hall is secured, Brakker announces his intention to hold the ship for ransom. The hobgoblin barbarian reveals the presence of a bomb capable of destroying the airship if anyone shows resistance or attempts escape. Sense Motive checks and divinations reveal he is telling the truth. The hobgoblin then forces the guests to the main deck above, where he can gather stargazing stragglers and keep his hostages all in one place.

Though a majority of the upper-class hostages have their own private security at their sides, these characters will not take action so long as they believe this to be a simple ransom operation. (For people as wealthy as these, ransom is a minor annoyance at best.) Likewise, the House Medani sentries will focus on preventing any NPC heroics, knowing that meeting the captor's demands is the best way to insure the safety of all guests. Once the PCs come to realize that Telgin Char's plan is to destroy the *Dragon*, they will likely be the only line of defense against that plan.

Creatures: As soon as Brakker and his gang emerge on the deck, a pair of harpies circling high above the ship (his two lady loves) descend to help manage the hostages. Assuming the PCs do not intervene, Brakker and his thugs take up the positions shown on the main deck battle map.

Brimstone Brakker: hp 59; see page 29.

Minotaurs (3): hp 44, 40, 36; *MM* 188.

Harpies (2): hp 33, 29; *MM* 150.

Hobgoblins (8): hp 6 each; *MM* 153.

Tactics: If attacked by the PCs during their attempts to secure the hostages, the monstrous thugs show no hesitation in executing a few people. After dropping an innocent bystander with his warhammer, Brakker turns to a PC and snarls, "On your head, pig. Ease up, or I crush more skulls."

Before entering the reception hall, Brakker ties two noxious smokesticks into his thick mane of hair and ignites them at the first sign of trouble. A haze of smoke surrounds the barbarian during battle, giving him and anyone within 10 feet concealment (20% miss chance). Any creature within 10 feet must also make a DC 15 Fortitude saving throw or be nauseated for 1 round. (The hobgoblin must also save against the effects, but he relies on his toughness to see him through.) A successful save renders a creature immune to the effects of these smokesticks.

Brakker hurls his other two noxious smokesticks if battle breaks out, and he delights in hitting strong-looking foes with *ray of enfeeblement*. Brakker reserves his rage so that he can continue to sling spells, and he uses his throwing axes rather than closing to melee. Once casting becomes impossible, the hobgoblin flies into a frothing, snarling rage and lays waste to foes with his adamantine warhammer.

The minotaurs use their powerful charge ability before cutting foes down with their battleaxes, while the hobgoblins attempt to flank foes if they can.

Development: If the PCs choose discretion over valor, they can help mediate Brimstone Brakker's demand of 200,000 gp for the hostages' freedom (in addition to the smaller fortune his thugs have already cleaned out from the House of Chance). For a crowd as well heeled as this one, getting the ransom together is an easy matter, but it will take an hour for the unmarked trade bars Brakker demands to be brought to the *Dragon*. However, what no one (including Brakker) realizes is that Telgin Char has no interest in collecting the ransom, but needs time to assemble and activate the *banishment* bomb that will send the *Dragon* crashing to the lower levels of Sharn.

Shortly after he takes the ship, Brakker begins communicating with Telgin through their *circles of sound*. Any listener can detect enmity between the hobgoblin and the Lhazaarite with a DC 15 Sense Motive check. About 30 minutes after the initial assault, the PCs see a hobgoblin (one of those working with Telgin Char) come up the spiral staircase at a run, approaching Brakker to

tell him Telgin is up to something. "He don't care about no ransom. Says you'll be spendin' it in Dolurrh." This should give the PCs an excuse to leap into action.

Observant PCs (DC 20 Spot check) note that neither Kalibar Jenks nor Jaeden Kovane appears to be among the hostages. During the initial attack, the halfling hid in his private office, while Kovane grabbed some potions and sprinkled himself with *dust of disappearance* before slipping away. The two attempt to stay hidden during the hostage drama so they can watch over the Brelish nobility in the crowd, but if the PCs are in need of assistance in taking out Brakker and his thugs, Kovane and Jenks lend them subtle aid. Kovane drags a hobgoblin down a ladder or stairwell, or hurls daggers at an enemy before disappearing belowdecks again. Jenks appears briefly to make a sneak attack before hiding as well. If the Lord Mayor or the captain is threatened directly, the Brelish agents drop their assumed identities and launch an all-out attack on the hijackers.

If battle is joined in earnest, the crew rushes to the fore. Give the PCs a chance to face off against Brakker if they wish, then tell them that the Medani sentries and private security appear to have the barbarian's forces well in hand, leaving them free to find out what Telgin Char is up to.

It's important to keep ship's artificer Manten Dramgrin safely out of combat, since he has a key role to play in Telgin Char's plot to destroy the *Dragon* (see the Banishment Bomb, page 12). If the PCs can see them, Dramgrin and his artificer rival Torren Blackfingers disappear almost immediately after melee breaks out. Blackfingers is intent on staying safe, while Dramgrin attempts to keep a distrustful eye on the gnome.

STEAM ROOM BATTLE (EL 8)

Telgin and eight hobgoblins are in the water elemental chamber (area 12) preparing the *banishment* bomb. The fourth minotaur keeps watch in the corridor and sniffs for troublemakers.

Sound: Telgin Char's crew working (automatic).

Aura: Moderate conjuration from the water elemental's sphere, strong abjuration from the *banishment* bomb.

The Situation: Telgin Char is hard at work installing the device while Brakker holds the ship. The hijacking is only a diversion, however, and Telgin will activate the bomb as soon as it is prepared.

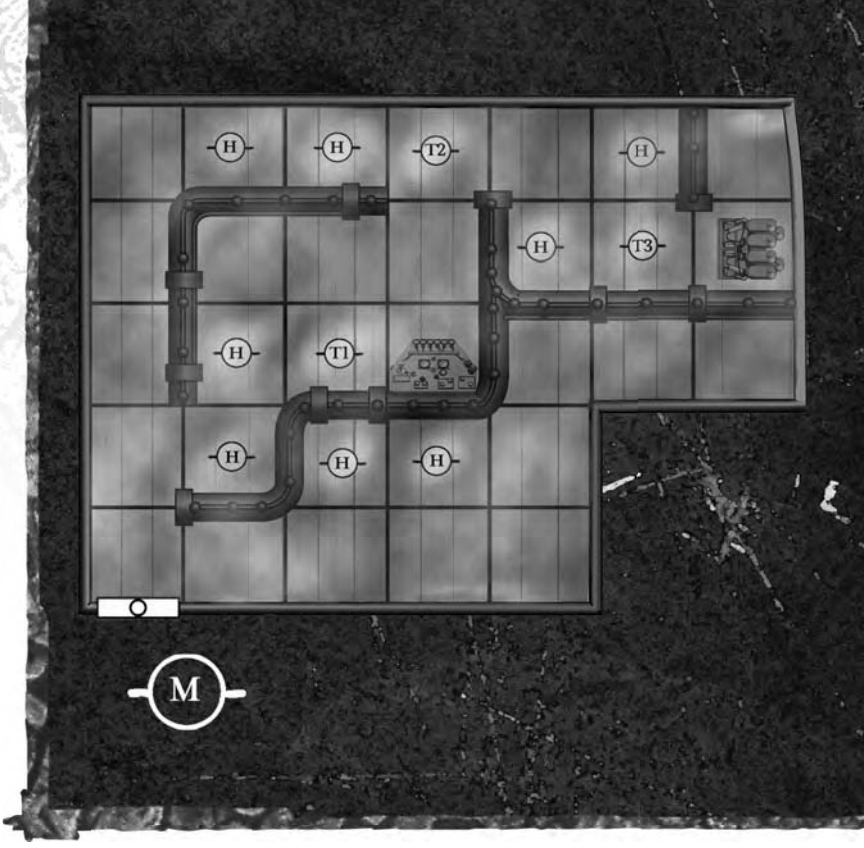
Creatures: As soon as the minotaur on guard senses a foe, he bellows out a tremendous roar, alerting Telgin and the hobgoblins to the threat.

Telgin Char: hp 29; see page 28.

Minotaur: hp 40; *MM* 188.

Hobgoblins (8): hp 6 each; *MM* 153.

Tactics: The minotaur charges any foe it can see and fights until slain. Meanwhile, the hobgoblins take up their positions as shown on the steam room battle map while Telgin activates the *banishment* bomb's countdown timer and attempts to escape.



Once the PCs make it past the sealed door (Open Lock DC 30, Strength DC 18), the two closest hobgoblins engage them. Telgin is located at the position marked T1 on the map. The pirate uses Disable Device to locate a weak joint on a hot steam pipe and fires his crossbow at it (AC 12). If his bolt hits, a blast of superheated steam is unleashed on two adjacent 5-foot squares (Telgin's choice), dealing 3d6 points of fire damage to anyone in those spaces (Reflex DC 14 half). Telgin then retreats to the square marked T2, taking cover while the hobgoblins in the middle corridor engage the PCs. The two hobgoblins in the south corridor rush out to flank the PCs after they enter the middle corridor.

Telgin watches until the hobgoblins are downed, then repeats his steam blast attack before retreating to the square marked T3 on the map. The two remaining hobgoblins spring out to engage the PCs as they pass, giving Telgin one last shot at the piping.

If Telgin is harmed or appears outmaneuvered, he quaffs his *potion of gaseous form* and escapes into one of the vents in this area. He floats along the piping to the cargo bay (area 17), recovering any damage with his curative potions as he joins Kray there.

Development: If Telgin is captured alive, no manner of persuasion can force the hardened sea dog to disable the bomb's countdown. Returning to prison is a fate worse than death for Telgin, and he will gladly perish alongside his captors. While the pirate can't be tricked into disarming the bomb, he can be persuaded into revealing information about his employer (a DC 20 Diplomacy or

Intimidate check). He is unaware of Malinko's identity, but knows that his mysterious benefactor is a powerful Lhazaarite.

THE BANISHMENT BOMB (EL 8)

With the hobgoblins and Telgin dealt with, the PCs are faced with the *banishment* bomb.

Aura: Moderate conjuration from the water elemental's sphere, strong abjuration from the *banishment* bomb.

The device is hidden behind a panel in the position located on the map (Search DC 15). The bomb is a mithral disk studded with glowing multicolored gemstones in a spiral pattern. The lights are cascading slowly down toward the center of the spiral, and a DC 12 Intelligence check determinse that the bomb will detonate in 6 rounds.

The Situation: The *banishment* bomb has been specifically crafted to take advantage of the *Dragon*'s unique elemental binding processes. Suppressing a bound elemental by spell power normally requires a caster to touch the elemental's dragonshard. However, based on information obtained by Malinko, Telgin Char knows that his specially designed device detonated within the water elemental chamber will disrupt the power of the linked secondary fire elemental for a few seconds. Because the fire elemental is wholly responsible for the *Dragon*'s lift, those few seconds will be more than enough time for the ship to plunge to its doom.

Because Telgin needed to smuggle the bomb's components on board past the *Dragon*'s House Medani security, the hostage-taking gave him the time he needed to assemble it. So that he and Kray can get off the ship before it falls, he built it with a countdown timer.

Any Disable Device or Knowledge (arcana) check reveals that if the bomb is moved, it will detonate 1 round later. A DC 25 Disable Device check delays the bomb's countdown by 1d6 rounds, but the bomb cannot be disarmed. Only one such check can be made, and failure wastes a round of countdown time.

A PC who makes a DC 20 Knowledge (arcana) check realizes that if the bomb is moved to the bound water elemental's sphere and positioned correctly, the blast will be absorbed by the huge water elemental bound to this chamber. One round after the bomb is moved, a sphere of shimmering white energy surges outward in a 10-foot-radius burst before collapsing on the elemental sphere. Any bound-elemental item or weapon caught in the blast is destroyed. One round after detonation, the sphere shudders and groans ominously. The piping around and overhead bursts, filling the room with a blast of superheated steam for 10 rounds (1d6 points of fire damage per round, –4 penalty on ranged attacks and on Search, Spot, and Listen checks).

Creature: Detonation of the bomb suppresses the bound water elemental (forcing it to return to its dragonshard) but prevents the ship from falling. However, when the suppression period ends after 2d6 minutes, the huge water elemental bound to the sphere emerges in a state of rage. The damage to the chamber allows it to break free and roam the ship, laying waste to any creature it sees. The now-unbound elemental continues to attack until destroyed.

Depending on how long it takes for the water elemental's suppression to end, the PCs might need to face the creature before following Telgin Char to the cargo bay. Alternatively, they might successfully defeat Telgin and Kray only to have to fight the elemental as it wreaks havoc.

Huge Water Elemental: hp 145; *MM* 98.

Development: The *Golden Dragon* is intended to serve as a launching pad for further adventures and as a possible mobile headquarters for the PCs. As such (and as the remainder of this adventure is unplayable without it), the airship cannot be destroyed by Telgin Char's plot. (Just don't let the PCs know that. . . .)

A smart group of characters working together should be able to overcome the threat of the *banishment* bomb. However, if the PCs' best efforts are insufficient, ship's artificer Manten Dramgrin is their ace in the hole—as well as the hook that will carry the PCs into the rest of the adventure.

If the characters cannot stop the *banishment* bomb's countdown (or if they choose to try to throw it off the ship in the time available to them), Dramgrin races into the water elemental chamber. He recognizes the device for what it is, affixes it to the water elemental's sphere, and shouts for the PCs and anyone else to get clear before the blast.

If the PCs were successful in disarming the *banishment bomb*, Dramgrin shows up after the water elemental has been defeated to size up the situation, and to confirm that the PCs have saved the ship. See the Aftermath section below for further developments.

CARGO BAY RUMBLE (EL 8)

If the PCs successfully deal with the *banishment* bomb in area 12, they must then deal with Kray, who waits in the cargo bay (area 17).

The Situation: If the PCs appear without Telgin (or arrive before him), Kray assumes that his friend has fallen and seeks revenge. If Telgin manages to flee area 12, he knows that the PCs will either deactivate the *banishment* bomb, or it will detonate as planned. Either way, he doesn't want to be anywhere near the airship, so he attempts to escape.

When the characters arrive in the cargo bay, read the following:

A humanoid mountain of adamantine and iron stands at the center of the cargo bay, its eyes burning fiercely as it raises an enormous serrated claw. The maw of the warforged opens wide, a cry like metal on metal piercing the air as it advances.

Creatures: Kray is more than willing to die for Telgin, and will fight to the bitter end.

Kray: hp 56; see page 28.

Telgin Char: hp 29; see page 28.

Tactics: If he is present, Telgin Char attempts to open the bay doors and commandeer one of the soarwood skiffs. If time allows, the artificer infuses his warforged companion with *toughen construct, bull's strength, cat's grace,* and *shield of faith* first. If he is prevented from fleeing, the pirate quaffs his *potion of haste* and *potion of displacement*, infuses his crossbow with *personal weapon augmentation* (giving it the flaming ability), and sneak attacks any PCs who engage Kray.

Kray is an unsubtle adversary, crushing enemies with his battleclaw. If a PC possesses a particularly powerful weapon, Kray attempts to sunder it.

Development: Especially if the PCs have been injured or have depleted their spells and magic in the events up to this one, Kray might prove a difficult opponent to defeat. Aside from direct combat, the warforged can be taken out by tricking him over the trapdoors in the cargo bay and activating them, or by bull rushing or otherwise driving Kray into the vault and sealing it behind him. The vault is currently open (passenger cargo for the *Dragon*'s first voyage has not been loaded yet). It can be closed and sealed by the captain or the first mate, either from the bridge or the cargo bay.

Unless the PCs prevent it, Telgin Char escapes the *Dragon* in one of the soarwood skiffs. The pirate is unaware of their recall function, however, and if the skiff is summoned back to the ship from the bridge, he leaps to his death rather than face capture.

An important clue to Telgin's benefactor is among his belongings if Telgin is captured or killed on the *Dragon*. As part of his pay, he received two silver spheres bearing the *arcane mark* of a sorcerer noble from the Lhazaar Principalities. Sea Baron Paldrith Malinko and his men, disguised as raiders, attacked the noble's ship more than two months ago, slaughtering him and his crew. Malinko is unaware of the *arcane mark* (which is only revealed by *detect magic*), and uses the spheres to pay his hired help.

This clue might lead the PCs to the sea baron's involvement in Part Two of this adventure. A DC 20 bardic knowledge check, a DC 20 Knowledge (local) check by anyone who was recently in the Lhazaar principalities, or a DC 20 Gather Information check in Sharn reveals the origin of the *arcane marks* and the fate of the noble and his ship. (Characters will find out only that the noble's vessel was boarded by pirates, not Malinko specifically.)

Aftermath

Telgin Char's specific knowledge of the *Golden Dragon*'s design makes artificer Manten Dramgrin suspect that someone in the crew (most likely Blackfingers) is involved in the plot to destroy it. (He doesn't realize that Sea Baron Paldrith Malinko's own attempts to commission a ship of the *Dragon*'s size provided the intelligence Telgin needed.) Depending on how the Banishment Bomb encounter played out, Dramgrin will make one of three offers to the characters.

If the PCs saved the *Dragon* on their own, Dramgrin humbly requests their aid, saying he clearly faces a foe with resources he cannot match.

If the PCs nearly succeeded in disabling the bomb (requiring Dramgrin only to step in at the last minute), he tells them that their willingness to put their lives on the line for others marks them as people he can trust. He makes a formal request for the PCs' aid, worried that the *Dragon*'s troubles are far from over.

If the PCs were completely uninvolved in disabling the bomb (for example, if they got caught up in the melee on the main deck and never made it to the water elemental room at all), Dramgrin saves the day on his own and blackmails the PCs. He needs watchful eyes under his direct control, and suggests that if the PCs don't want to help him, it will be easy to convince the Sharn authorities that they were complicit in the sabotage plot. The PCs might not be happy having their services extorted in this way, but the players will likely appreciate a chance to make up for any initial failure.

Dramgrin clears his request with the captain, and the PCs are on board for the rest of the adventure. However, in any scenario (especially the last one), feel free to leave some uncertainty surrounding the artificer's motivations. Remind the PCs of Dramgrin's absence during the fight—especially when the artificer becomes a suspect himself in later sabotage (see Malinko's Revenge, page 18).

If the PCs were noticeably successful in helping prevent the *Golden Dragon*'s destruction, they earn the deep gratitude of House Lyrandar—especially Captain Alastair, whose reputation has been saved by the characters' timely intervention. The house rewards the PCs with 1,000 gp apiece, and the captain and crew work amiably with them.

If the PCs were unsuccessful in Part One of the adventure and are being blackmailed by Dramgrin, he arranges stateroom passage on the next leg of the journey and promises to pay a total of 1,000 gp for their assistance. Only Dramgrin and the captain know of the characters' mission, and the PCs might have to watch themselves around the rest of the crew.

If the characters witnessed Jaeden Kovane aiding them in their fight against the villains, the Brelish agent reveals his true role on the ship to them, though neither he nor

Kalibar Jenks reveals the halfling's ties to the King's Dark Lanterns. If Jenks is observed attacking the hijackers and confronted, he simply claims, "Scum deserved what they got. I have no love for monsters. Besides, I've invested me entire livelihood into the House of Chance. This ship is my future, and I plan to defend it."

Feel free to incorporate other facets of your campaign into the conclusion of this part of the adventure. A PC's date might swoon at their heroism or balk at their cowardice. A patron might be greatly appreciative of being represented by such daring subordinates. Success also means that the PCs will have gained the public eye and the gratitude of Sharn's elite.

Part Two: Cloak, Dagger, and Spell

The maiden voyage of the *Golden Dragon* takes the airship on a diplomatic mission across the fathomless depths of the Thunder Sea. Its destination: the bustling port town of Stormreach. The vessel is carrying a full complement of guests, including diplomats of the Five Nations and members of the dragonmarked houses carrying vital missives for their Xen'drik agents.

Watching over it all, the *Dragon*'s House Medani sentries are on edge in the aftermath of the incidents in Sharn. Any disturbance, any hint of violence or conflict, and they will strike first and ask questions later. Naturally, sabotage, theft, and murder ensue.

When a staff clerk of the Karrnathi ambassador to Breland turns up dead and the finger is pointed at a Thrane cardinal and his bodyguards, it is up to the PCs to intervene before the situation escalates. However, what no one suspects is that the clerk is no innocent bookkeeper, nor is he dead. Gunter Hegerin, secretly a powerful necromancer agent of the Emerald Claw, fakes his own death to implicate the Thranes, then possesses Cardinal Menasos Bethenade with a *magic jar* spell. In the cardinal's body, he intends to cause an international incident of epic proportions, hoping to restore his homeland of Karrnath to its former glory through blood and iron.

As if preventing war were not enough, the PCs must also determine the location of top-secret documents seemingly lost by an Orien courier on board. If they discover Kalibar Jenks behind the theft, they might learn the cunning halfling's true affiliation, and must choose where their loyalties lie.

After Telgin Char's dismal failure, Paldrith Malinko decides to see to the *Dragon*'s downfall personally. The sea baron books passage on the airship, plotting to sabotage its laboratory with the help of a doppelganger agent. The PCs must first stop the saboteur, then follow the trail back to Malinko, all while averting war and crossing paths with agents of the Brelish crown.

NPCs on Board

Below is a summary of the new personalities aboard the *Golden Dragon* in Part Two of this adventure.

Ambassador Sedge Avadarrn: Karrnath's Ambassador to Breland, Sedge is a tall, blond-haired human with cool blue eyes. He bears little love for the Silver Flame, but he seeks peace for the people of his homeland, whose blood has too long soaked the fields of war.

Cardinal Menasos Bethenade: Thrane's Ambassador to Breland, and a fiercely pious raven-haired human who seeks to spread the Silver Flame's influence. Karrnath's despicable and disrespectful practice of reanimating the dead to fight in its armies offends the cardinal's sense of decency.

Logar Vericrosst: A House Orien courier carrying vital messages for the house's Stormreach enclave. Logar is a fire-haired half-elf with a temper to match and a penchant for gambling. When his missives go missing, his anger threatens unrest until they are found.

Sir Gedavin Brant and Dame Hollia Keln: Bodyguards of Cardinal Bethenade. Stoic and stalwart zealots of the Silver Flame who have worked together for years, these paladins never balk at the cardinal's orders. Gedavin's golden locks flow about his sturdy shoulders, and his eyes are a cool gray. Hollia's hair is cropped nearly scalp short, and her long face is a stranger to smiles. Her lithe body is indicative of her dedication to harsh training in the arts of war.

Skarad: A Karrnathi skeleton and the chief bodyguard of Ambassador Avadarrn, Skarad is a large specimen of his kind, with a smoldering red gaze. He is proud to serve his country from beyond death, and finds those with qualms about his presence to be exasperating.

Gunter Hegerin: Gunter's true identity as a powerful necromancer in the employ of the Emerald Claw would not be obviously apparent from the small human's bookish demeanor. With his thin face, wispy goatee, and meek voice, Gunter plays the part of a scribe well. He is a patriot in a very twisted sense, seeking to see Karrnath restored to its former glory as a nation of carnage and warfare, not cowed by the peace of Thronehold. He is posing as a simple clerk in Ambassador Sedge Avadarrn's service, a cover he has maintained for some time.

Halas Martain: Legendary explorer, relic hunter, and braggart, Martain is an egomaniac with no compunction against lying, cheating, and stealing his way to glory. For more information on this intrepid if troublesome adventurer, see *ECS* 253 (use the 9th-level Martain).

Sea Baron Paldrith Malinko: The dashing, arrogant, and ambitious pirate has his eye on Prince Ryger's place at the helm of the Lhazaar Principalities. Once a lowborn smuggler, Malinko is a self-made man who gets what he wants. If the *Golden Dragon* were to be destroyed, his own vessel (the *Cloud Dancer*) would reign supreme in the sky.

Azango: A doppelganger whose service to his criminal guild in Sharn is unwavering, Azango is currently on loan to Paldrith Malinko. Unknown to either Azango or Malinko, the changeling monk Zan is a former member of Azango's guild, and he recognizes Azango when the doppelganger comes on board. (If you use the *Sharn: City of Towers* supplement in your game, Zan and Azango are both affiliated with the Tyrants).

Jackrin, Skrakes, and Meldin: Paldrith Malinko's bodyguards.

Medani Sentries: Eighteen guards from House Medani accompany the *Dragon* on its first voyage.

STATEROOM ASSIGNMENTS

The captain has wisely placed the Karrnathi contingent and their Thrane counterparts on opposite sides of the passenger deck, with the PCs between them. Stateroom assignments are as follows:

8a: Captain Alistair d'Lyrandar

8b: Paldrith Malinko, Azango, Jackrin, Skrakes, and Meldin

8c: Ambassador Sedge Avadarrn, Gunter Hegerin, Skarad and four Karrnathi skeleton guards

8d: Tarla and Nicolette

8e: Logar Vericrosst

8f: Lieutenant Mazzia d'Lyrandar

8g: PCs

8n: Cardinal Menasos Bethenade

8o: Sir Gedavin Brant, and Dame Hollia Keln

8i: Halas Martain

8j: Chief Artificer Manten Dramgrin

One stateroom is available for the use of the PCs. If more than two characters in the group need to rest, they can make use of the floor or the bathtub. (If the group of PCs is exceptionally large, they can be given an additional room.)

The Voyage Begins

The *Golden Dragon* departs Lyrandar Tower early in the morning, and the first day of travel is blessed with clear skies and balmy southbound breezes. The ship floats above a sea of clouds, occasionally dipping beneath the billowy white to allow guests a view of dolphins frolicking in the waves of the Thunder Sea, and sahuagin caravans surfacing to trade with Brelish merchant vessels. The PCs have had time to settle into their staterooms, and their first day of travel gives them a chance to meet the other guests on board.

Gunter Hegerin is above deck feeding errant birds that accompany the *Dragon*. The necromancer keeps to himself, but if engaged in conversation he chats amiably and intelligently about nearly any topic. He says of the birds, "They are like good friends you meet only once, but you hope they remember you always." The evil necromancer should seem like a quiet, shy, and compassionate individual to make his apparent death affect the PCs personally. Before coming up on deck, he has cast *misdirection* on himself to conceal his aura.

Sea Baron Paldrith Malinko spends nearly all his time in Jenks's House of Chance enjoying the company of Nicolette, who pretends to be falling for the handsome sea baron to spy on him for Jenks. Malinko is generous with his coin, winning plenty of friends among the guests and crew. His four Lhazaarite bodyguards and drinking companions (Azango among them) always accompany him. If the PCs introduce themselves, they can make a DC 25 Sense Motive check to note a well-concealed coldness pass over Malinko's bright eyes. The sea baron is well aware of any part the PCs played in Telgin's failure, and he plans to get even.

If the PCs encounter Zan, the disguised changeling appears unusually nervous (Sense Motive DC 19). Zan has caught sight of Azango among Malinko's guards, and recognizes him as a doppelganger connected to the guild from which he is fleeing. Zan assumes (incorrectly) that Azango is on the *Dragon* searching for him, and spends as much time in Serenity above the Clouds (area 16) as he can.

Halas Martain is also a regular at the House of Chance, where he trades tales of his life and times in Xen'drik with other travelers for free drinks and the attention of Tarla (who fancies the rugged type).

The other guests are not encountered by the PCs until the evening of the first day, in the following incidents.

EVENT 1: DEBATE ON DEATH

When the PCs head to the reception hall for their evening meal, they note that the sky has darkened and a storm front lies ahead. As the characters enter area 7, read the following:

A tall, black-haired human clothed in ornate robes bearing the emblem of the Silver Flame slams his fist on a table where a handsome blond Karrnathi gentleman sits enjoying a dinner of blood sausage and cheeses. The sound of dancing crockery is followed by silence as all eyes turn. Neither man is particularly imposing physically, but the man and woman dressed head to toe in burnished full plate armor flanking the Thrane priest certainly are. Behind the Karrnathi, five suits of armor that had been standing so stock-still they appeared to be part of the room's decor step forward in unison. The largest of the armored figures raises its visor to unveil a menacing yellowed skull and red eyes that smolder with malice.

The Situation: The PCs are witnessing a tense argument between Karrnathi Ambassador Sedge Avadarrn and Thrane Ambassador Cardinal Menasos Bethenade. The cardinal began the dispute by approaching Sedge and inquiring why the Karrnathi "make their dead fight their wars for them." Avadarrn simply smiled and answered, "Better than burning them to some ridiculous god." Things went downhill from there. Avadarrn will not allow the situation to escalate further, even though Skarad would love nothing more than to trounce the overstuffed Thrane priest.

Development: If the PCs approach, Avadarrn welcomes their timely intervention and invites them to join him. The introduction of strangers tempers Menasos's anger, though the cardinal regrets he cannot join the PCs. Eyeing the walking dead behind Avadarrn, he retires, his paladins following close on his heels.

As Bethenade exits the room, he slams into Gunter Hegerin, causing the Karrnathi scribe to drop an armload of parchments. The cardinal snarls an apology and storms out. Gunter gathers his fallen parchments and scampers to his stateroom.

If the PCs accept Avadarrn's invitation, he regales them with polite political banter explaining the conflict between Thrane and Karrnath, including the cardinal's bias against the Karrnathi practice of employing undead in their armies.

As the characters finish their meals and drinks in the reception hall, the rumble of thunder shakes crystal goblets on the tables, and rain is heard against the hull.

EVENT 2: DEATH OF A SCRIBE

An hour after the incident in the reception hall, Gunter Hegerin is found dead in his room.

Aura: Faint necromancy in Gunter's ruby necklace.

The Situation: Captain Alastair approaches the PCs and asks them to accompany him to the Karrnathi stateroom (8c), where Gunter's body lies. There are no markings on the body, no evidence of a struggle, and no sign of anyone breaking in, but the scribe is unmistakably dead.

With a storm brewing in the clouds ahead, the captain can't devote his crew to investigating the untimely demise of a diplomat, but he does not want the House Medani sentries needlessly harassing the *Dragon*'s other passengers. When Avadarrn arrives on the scene with his undead minions in tow, he is levelheaded and calm about his scribe's death, but firmly demands an investigation. If the PCs can attempt to figure out what happened, both the captain and the Karrnathi ambassador will be grateful.

Avadarrn makes no allegations, but Skarad gnashes his rotted teeth and quietly hisses of "Thrane treachery." Anyone making a DC 20 Sense Motive check sees trouble brewing in the skeleton's fiery eye sockets.

Development: Investigation of the crime scene reveals that Gunter was taking his evening glass of wine when he succumbed. A DC 20 Search check allows anyone examining his discarded goblet to discover traces of dark reaver powder (*DMG* 297). However, if a PC with the Heal skill examines Gunter's body (and makes a DC 20 check), he or she notes the absence of any symptoms of death by poison.

In truth, the devious necromancer is not dead. An heirloom ruby necklace he wears is actually a specially constructed single-use magic item, allowing Gunter to target a specific creature with a *magic jar* effect. Gunter has successfully possessed Cardinal Menasos Bethenade, whose soul is now imprisoned in the ruby. Gunter, in the Thrane ambassador's body, plans to wreak havoc on relations between Karrnath and the land of the Silver Flame.

EVENT 3: MISSING MISSIVES

Shortly after Gunter's apparent corpse is discovered, the storm increases in intensity. The captain rules the main deck off limits until the weather clears, and the *Dragon*'s guests pass the time with warm spiced wine in the reception hall, or bouts of cards and dice in the House of Chance. Any PCs in the House of Chance or the reception hall notice the following disturbance.

The Situation: Logar Vericrosst, while indulging in his favorite pastime (gambling), loses more than his shirt—he also loses track of a set of secret missives intended for the Orien enclave in Stormreach. While Logar is at the dragonwheel, one of Jenks's goblin servants accidentally careens into him, spilling a tray of tankards in the process. A moment later, after realizing that his pouch with the missives inside has been stolen, the enraged courier seizes the scrawny goblin by the neck.

Paldrith Malinko and his bodyguards allow their hands to drift toward their blades, and Jenks ducks behind the bar. Halas Martain rolls his eyes and scoots his chair back. Four Medani sentries grimly draw swords. Vericrosst hurls the goblin across the room, savagely demanding the return of his documents as the other goblins surge forward.

Creatures: With this many characters ready to fight, a good old-fashioned barroom dustup ensues.

Logar Vericrosst: hp 35; *ECS* 236 (typical House Orien courier).

Goblins (8): hp 5 each; *MM* 133, except these goblins use tankards and trays as improvised weapons (–2 melee, –1 ranged, 1d3 damage).

Sea Baron Paldrith Malinko: hp 49; see page 30.

Jackrin, Skrakes, and Meldin: hp 20 each; see page 30.

Halas Martain: hp 40; *ECS* 253 (use 9th-level statistics).

Medani Sentries (4): hp 26 each; *ECS* 235.

Tactics: As long as the PCs do not draw blades, neither do any NPCs except the Medani sentries. In the first round of combat, goblins swarm Logar, flanking the courier while the sentries wade in, zealously attempting to subdue all combatants.

In the second round, a goblin staggers into Malinko's table and causes his bodyguards Jackrin and Skrakes to draw arms. Meldin and Azango continue to protect the sea baron, though Azango will not fight. (He has taken on the appearance of a Lhazaar buccaneer, but has no skill with a sword.) Halas Martain watches with an amused expression, hurling a tankard of ale at any distracted combatants. If any PCs draw weapons or cast offensive spells, Malinko and Meldin also join the fray. The sentries declare open season on any and all combatants, and the bar erupts in bloodshed.

If the PCs are unable to put a stop to the fighting in 5 rounds, Captain Alastair and Velgram Linntorm arrive. The bosun barks, "Belay this folly on the double!" No NPCs present wish to chance the half-orc's ire, and they cease attacking unless the PCs continue to do so.

Development: When the fray dies down, Logar sheepishly apologizes for his actions. He explains his situation to the captain, who has the courier confined to quarters but promises to look into the disappearance of his documents.

As Logar unhappily retires to his stateroom, the captain again turns to the PCs for help. Concerned that the Medani sentries are far too keen on proving themselves after the events in Sharn, he asks the characters if they will discreetly investigate.

The culprit is none other than Kalibar Jenks, who lifted the missives a short time before the serving goblin stumbled into Vericrosst. Jenks pilfered the documents under direct orders from the Dark Lanterns, intending to replace them with forgeries that order House Orien to cease all exploration and planning around future transportation developments in Xen'drik. Though Orien is likely years away from establishing even a regular courier system on the mysterious continent, Breland fears the power and profits such development might bring to the house.

Unfortunately for Jenks, the goblin's serving accident alerted the courier before the forgeries could be planted. The halfling's only recourse is to place the forgeries on some patsy and let that individual take the fall.

Before the *Dragon* left Sharn, sources in the Dark Lanterns hinted at Malinko's involvement in the attempted sabotage during the christening party, and Jenks suspects the sea baron is plotting against the ship. He decides to kill two birds with one stone. Soon after the brawl breaks out, he slips the forged missives into the belt pouch of Jackrin, the sea baron's bodyguard. Give any PC present in the House of Chance an opposed Spot check against Jenks's Sleight of Hand check to notice the halfling planting the documents.

Jenks then arranges for one of his elf bards to mention to the PCs that she glimpsed the missives on the pirate's person. This remark either throws the PCs off Jenks's trail or convinces them that the halfling and his entertainers are up to no good, depending on whether they observed the switch. At the same time, Zan overhears the bard's ruse on one of his infrequent appearances outside the spa. He approaches the PCs privately to advise them against confronting Malinko and Azango, but will offer no reasons for the warning unless coerced or persuaded to do so (a DC 20 Intimidate or Diplomacy check).

If and when the PCs elect to seek the documents on the Lhazaarite, their investigation will very likely spark a conflict between them and the sea baron, possibly leading the PCs to uncover his treacherous plans.

Jenks keeps the real missives in the secret compartment in his personal quarters (area 10). He intends to turn them over to the Dark Lanterns upon the *Golden Dragon*'s return to Breland.

Another clue linking Sea Baron Paldrith Malinko to the attempted sabotage in Sharn is revealed when the Lhazaarite bodyguards gamble with the same silver spheres found on Telgin Char in Part One of this adventure. Any PC spending time in the House of Chance notices the spheres with a DC 15 Spot check. If the characters detected the *arcane marks* on Telgin's spheres, a PC might gamble with the Lhazaarites to obtain one of the buccaneer's spheres to examine.

To simulate the gambling, have the Lhazaarites challenge the PCs to a game of three-dragon ante. If you don't play three-dragon ante, have the players and NPCs put down an agreed-upon stake, then use opposed checks to resolve a game—1d20 + Intelligence modifier + Profession (gambler) modifier, to simulate the effects of random chance, know-how, and instinct. Characters with no ranks in Profession (gambler) use their Wisdom modifier instead.

EVENT 4: BONES AND BLADES (EL 9)

The brawl at the House of Chance is the first of many outbreaks of violence on the *Golden Dragon*. The second occurs late in the evening in the reception hall.

The Situation: The Karrnathi skeletons in Ambassador Sedge Avadarrn's service, angered by the apparent assassination of Gunter Hegerin, decide to confront the paladins of the Silver Flame, Gedavin and Hollia. If the PCs are in the reception hall or the House of Chance, they witness the skeletons storm into the hall and accuse the paladins of treachery and murder. It is only moments before blades are drawn and crossed. If the PCs are elsewhere on the ship, a deckhand summons them to the reception hall with a desperate plea—"Someone's going to be killed!"

Creatures: Before the PCs can intervene, the battle is in full swing, and not just between the Karrnathi

skeletons and the Thrane paladins. The ship's House Medani sentries are attacking both sides.

It's a no-win situation. If the PCs do not take charge, the combatants fight it out until one side is destroyed. On the other hand, stepping into the middle of the conflict enrages both sides, as well as the sentries, who attack the meddlesome PCs as readily as they do the brawling passengers.

Karrnathi Skeletons (5): hp 30 (Skarad), 23, 21, 20, 19, 17; *ECS* 292.

Gedavin Brant and Hollia Keln: hp 36, 34; see page 29.

Medani Sentries (4): hp 26 each; *ECS* 235.

Tactics: Tensions on the *Dragon* have reached the boiling point, and both the Thranes and Karrns are out for blood. Neither they nor the Medani sentries will hesitate to use deadly force on the PCs as well.

Skarad orders the rest of the skeletons to engage any PCs who try to come between him and Hollia, who is only too happy to accept the skeleton's challenge. Gedavin attempts to delay the PCs' involvement as well, though he won't use his sword on them, laying in with his steel gauntlets instead.

Development: If the PCs are able to quell the fight before anyone is slain, award them full experience points for the encounter. After five rounds of combat, the captain and both ambassadors arrive to break it up. The captain is outraged that passengers would shed blood (or bone) on his ship and orders the skeletons and paladins confined to quarters for the remainder of the journey.

Ambassador Avadarrn is furious with Skarad, but the skeleton is intent on seeing the Thranes pay for Gunter's death. He leaves the scene fuming, his comrades in tow. The paladins regain their composure with more grace (even offering to lay hands on any PCs injured in the scuffle) before retiring to their chambers.

This might be the PCs' first opportunity to see Menasos Bethenade since Gunter Hegerin's *magic jar*. Gunter, in the Thrane's body, displays false concern at the skirmish, but is secretly delighted. PCs can make an opposed Sense Motive check against his Bluff check to note something amiss.

The PCs might also note that Azango has left Malinko's company at some point between the brawl of Event 3 and this one.

EVENT 5: MALINKO'S REVENGE (EL 10)

With passengers and crew distracted by the battle belowdecks and the storm keeping potential witnesses from heading above, Malinko sets his plan into motion.

The Situation: The sea baron orders Azango to assume artificer Manten Dramgrin's appearance and go to the laboratory. The PCs should see him heading there in the guise of Dramgrin. If confronted, Azango mutters some excuse about securing the laboratory in case the storm worsens. The PCs can make a Spot check opposed by the doppelganger's Disguise check and a Sense Motive check against Azango's Bluff check.

Earlier that evening, Paldrith Malinko opened the lock on the laboratory door, allowing the doppelganger to enter freely now and sabotage the equipment within. (If the door has somehow been locked again, he kicks

Thrane and Karrnathi soldiers engage in a little "diplomacy"

through it. Let any PCs on the main deck make a DC 18 Listen check to hear him over the storm.)

Azango damages a vat of volatile alchemical reagents, releasing explosive gas into the air. Next, he fastens tindertwigs to the doorframe, set to ignite when the door is opened. The next person to enter the laboratory sets the tindertwigs off, igniting the gas and causing the laboratory to explode and take the forecastle of the *Golden Dragon* with it. The explosion deals 8d6 points of damage to anyone in areas 3 or 4 (Reflex DC 16 half).

Development: If the PCs check with the captain after encountering the false Dramgrin's jaunt above deck, Alastair informs them he gave no such order. Dramgrin is actually in his stateroom playing the violin, and the PCs can find him there.

As soon as Azango comes belowdecks, he transforms back into his Lhazaarite guise and returns to the House of Chance to join the sea baron. If the PCs miss him, they might still investigate the laboratory.

A DC 25 Search check reveals the tindertwigs fastened to the doorframe of the lab. A DC 25 Survival check reveals the presence of volatile gas in the air to anyone outside. A DC 25 Disable Device check allows a PC to remove the tindertwigs without igniting the gas and to carefully air out the room, removing the threat.

If the PCs do not discover the sabotage within 1 hour, Torren Blackfingers heads to the laboratory and detonates the gas, dying in the explosion. The blast rocks the ship, and the captain fights the storm and the shock wave as he tries to maintain control. Alastair prevails, but the vessel is badly damaged and must put in for serious repairs immediately upon arrival in Stormreach. While the *Golden Dragon* can be repaired, the reputation of the airship and Captain Alastair's career are in ruins, just as Malinko intended.

EVENT 6: WAR ON THE HORIZON (EL 9)

Gunter Hegerin's plan to escalate tensions between Thrane and his homeland of Karrnath culminates in another murder.

Sound: Gunter's ranting (Listen DC 15 from anywhere in the stateroom area), sounds of battle (automatic).

The Situation: The necromancer, in the guise of Cardinal Menasos Bethenade, pens a confession in the cardinal's hand revealing his responsibility for the murder of Gunter Hegerin. The confession is concocted to sound as though the poisoned wine Gunter imbibed was intended for Ambassador Avadarrn instead. The necromancer leaves this confession in the cardinal's stateroom before setting the last phase of his plan in motion.

Development: In the guise of the cardinal, Gunter works the loyalty of his Thrane bodyguards, stoking their fiery anger at Skarad's accusation. Gunter demands that Brant and Keln break their confinement and seek out the skeleton. The paladins leave the stateroom, easily overpowering the two Medani sentries posted outside before heading for Skarad's quarters down the hall.

Creatures: Upon arriving at Skarad's door, the paladins engage the Medani sentries there. This alerts the skeletons, which emerge and join the fray.

Karrnathi Skeletons (5): hp 30 (Skarad), 23, 21, 20, 19, 17; *ECS* 292.

Gedavin Brant and Hollia Keln: hp 36, 34; see page 29.

Tactics: This time, neither side breaks off the attack, and each combatant must be subdued by the PCs if they wish to end the fray.

Development: Shortly after the paladins depart their stateroom, Gunter (in the cardinal's body) imbibes a draught of wine poisoned with dark reaver powder, and them immediately returns to his *magic jar.* This allows the unfortunate cardinal to return to his own body just as it is overcome by deadly poison. The cardinal collapses dead on the floor of his stateroom alongside his betraying confession.

Gunter then ends the *magic jar* effect and returns to his body, now stowed in the cargo bay. He hopes the suicide of the cardinal, the confession, and the open battle between Thrane paladins and Karrnathi soldiers on board the *Dragon* will destabilize the peace between Thrane and Karrnath. Once he has returned to his body, he casts *teleport*, escaping to Stormreach ahead of the airship to begin preparations for his second mission in the service of the Emerald Claw (see Part Three, below).

If the PCs do not investigate the cargo bay themselves, the captain alerts them shortly before the *Dragon* reaches Stormreach that Gunter's body has apparently been stolen.

EVENT 7: SEA BARON SHOWDOWN (EL 10)

Even if the characters don't put all the pieces of Malinko's plot together, a standoff between the sea baron, his minions, and the PCs is all but inevitable.

The Situation: If Malinko has reason to believe the PCs are on to him (as he will if they prevent the destruction of the laboratory or are seen investigating the explosion's aftermath), he makes preparations to defend himself.

Creatures: Malinko first has Azango replace one of the House Medani sentries. In this guise, the doppelganger will surprise the PCs when the battle is joined. Malinko and his bodyguards quaff their *potions of cat's grace* and *mage armor,* then seek out the characters to duel them.

Sea Baron Paldrith Malinko: hp 49; see page 30.

Jackrin, Skrakes, and Meldin: hp 20 each; see page 30.

Azango, doppelganger: hp 20; *MM* 72.

Tactics: Malinko fights with the panache of an

accomplished veteran, making liberal use of Tumble checks to achieve flanking positions against his foes, and employing Improved Feint against any he can't flank to gain the benefit of his sneak attack ability. He uses Two-Weapon Fighting to lash out with his rapier and dagger.

Jackrin, Skrakes, and Meldin also attempt to flank foes.

Azango approaches the fray as a Medani sentry and seems to enter the fray on the characters' side. He then attacks an unaware PC from a flanking position as well.

The Lhazaarites fight to the death. If reduced to 5 hit points or fewer, Malinko surrenders in the hope of buying his freedom with political favors at a later date. Azango attempts to flee, killing and replacing a crew member if reduced to fewer than 3 hit points.

Development: If taken alive, the sea baron admits his involvement in both sabotage attempts on the *Dragon*. His hatred for all dragonmarked houses (for their hunting of his aberrant marked family) and his personal vendetta against House Lyrandar for outshining his own massive airship project becomes instantly apparent.

Malinko will also deny that his people had anything to do with the theft of the Orien papers (a DC 15 Sense Motive check reveals that he speaks the truth). This might lead the PCs back into investigating the documents' disappearance, and into a potential confrontation with Kalibar Jenks and his ally Jaeden Kovane.

EVENT 8: FOR CROWN AND COUNTRY (EL 9)

If the PCs ascertain that Kalibar Jenks is actually behind the theft of the Orien missives, they must decide what to do about him.

The Situation: If Jenks is confronted, he concocts a lie, claiming the criminal Boromar clan ordered him to steal the missives and plant the forgeries. He then tries to bribe the PCs into silence with 500 gp each (taken from his House of Chance earnings in the cargo bay vault). If this fails, the halfling stalls for time to inform Jaeden Kovane of the situation and gather his elf accomplices. If the PCs hold him, Jenks attempts to escape and seek Kovane's aid.

Once together, the Brelish agents attempt to threaten the PCs into keeping silent. If one or more of the characters are Brelish citizens, Jenks and Kovane explain the importance of their mission to Brelish diplomacy, and command the PCs to keep their noses out of official Crown business.

Creatures: The PCs are faced with a conundrum. If they do nothing, they are allowing House Lyrandar to be duped and manipulated by the Brelish government. If they attempt to intervene, they face official charges—plus a battle with the Brelish agents before them. The choice is theirs.

Kalibar Jenks: hp 27; see page 31.

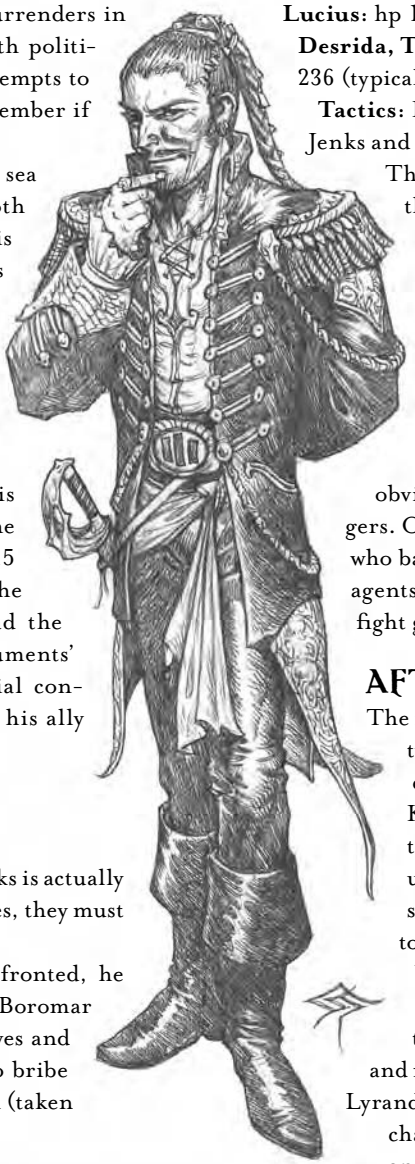
Jaeden Kovane: hp 34; see page 31.

Lucius: hp 19; see page 31.

Desrida, Tarla, and Nicolette: hp 22, 21, 18; *ECS* 236 (typical House Phiarlan entertainer).

Tactics: Kovane hands out his many potions to Jenks and the bards to prepare them for the fray. The agents favor a running fight in which they can make use of their Hide and Move Silently skills, not to mention Jenks's joker from a *deck of illusions*. If possible, they ambush the PCs, Jenks using a *potion of invisibility* and Kovane employing *dust of disappearance*.

Once the battle is joined, Jenks tries to flank to gain the benefit of sneak attack, while Kovane lays into any obvious spellcasters with his vicious daggers. One of the bards sings to aid the others, who battle with their rapiers. All the Brelish agents are fiercely loyal to the crown, and fight grimly until slain.



Sea Baron Malinko plots the Golden Dragon's downfall

AFTERMATH

The repercussions of this part of the adventure might resonate through your entire campaign. War between Thrane and Karrnath might begin brewing once the events on the *Dragon* become public, unless the PCs uncover Gunter's evil scheme (they have another chance to capture Gunter in Part Three; see below).

If the PCs can avert the sabotage of the laboratory, they earn further thanks and favors from Captain Alastair and House Lyrandar that they can call in at any time. The characters' interaction with Kalibar Jenks and Jaeden Kovane might have positive or negative effects lasting for years. If the PCs aid the Brelish agents in their mission, they might end up on their way to joining the shadowy ranks of the King's Dark Lanterns. If the PCs oppose Breland's interests, they find a harsh welcome upon their return to Sharn.

Part Three: Ruins of the Giants

In this part of the adventure, the PCs are hired by Halas Martain to accompany the intrepid explorer to a ruined giant citadel in the teeming jungles south of Stormreach. There, the characters face off against Gunter Hegerin as he carries out his second mission for the Emerald Claw: the animation of an undead giant army to besiege Stormreach. With Karrnath driven to war (or so Gunter hopes), the Emerald Claw plans to strike Xen'drik interests, cutting its enemies off from the rich treasures the wild continent offers.

Halas Martain is a charming snake. He does everything in his power to win the PCs over in Part Two, praising their efforts in solving the many conflicts on board the *Dragon* during the journey. The explorer has been planning an expedition to the ruined giant citadel for some time, and he will need sturdy adventurers to take the risks while he claims any credit and success.

He ensures the characters that the mysterious ruin will be the adventure of a lifetime. He is careful not to mention that he plans to keep all the treasure he finds and pay the characters a token percentage at best. If the PCs attempt to negotiate terms, Martain sidesteps the discussion with a hearty laugh and vague promises.

If Martain has somehow alienated the PCs (or vice versa), then Captain Alastair asks the characters for one last favor. Given Martain's reputation, the captain cannot refuse him the loan of a soarwood skiff, but requests that the PCs accompany the explorer to ensure that he and the skiff return unharmed.

But . . . We Killed Gunter

If the PCs saw through Gunter Hegerin's *magic jar* ruse and captured or killed the troublesome necromancer, never fear. If Gunter does not make contact with Claw associates in Stormreach on schedule, the Emerald Claw dispatches one of its most trusted agents to handle his mission: a female elf necromancer named Demise (*ECS* 252). Replace Gunter in this section with the 8th-level Demise, and give her a *wand of animate dead* to help her in her mission.

Getting to the Ruins

The view of the jungle canopy is breathtaking, and the noise from an orchestra of rain-forest denizens rises constantly from the greenery below the soarwood skiff. The PCs should catch glimpses of dinosaurs roaming through the trees and cautious lizardfolk peering skyward at the strange flying ship above. Martain's knowledge of Xen'drik should be made very apparent (and annoying) to the PCs as he points out every creature by name and demonstrates expert knowledge of their habits and physiology. Irritating though it might be, the veteran explorer's expertise allows the PCs to navigate the endless stretch of jungle and arrive at the giant citadel without delay, avoiding dangerous denizens and natural hazards.

The Ruined Citadel

Martain signals to slow the skiff, and as if on cue, the jungle canopy parts ahead. The citadel emerges from a jagged stone cliff, its towering entryway easily large enough to ride two war mammoths abreast through its stony arches. Giant-sized stairs, each the height of a half-orc, ascend to the entrance. At their base, the stairs disappear into a sprawling field of steaming, bubbling mud.

Martain suggests setting the soarwood skiff down outside the mud fields to avoid attack from any unseen residents. Once the skiff sets down, Martain dons his pack and a devilish half-grin as he makes his way toward the citadel ahead.

Gunter Hegerin used *teleport* to travel from Stormreach to the citadel, so there is no sign of his presence until the group reaches the citadel's great hall.

1: Steaming Mud Fields (EL 7)

The muddy earth surrounding the stairs to the citadel entrance is heated by magma vents below the surface.

Light: Sunlight.

Sound: Surrounding jungle noises (automatic).

The brown-red slurry is very hot but not dangerously so. PCs can navigate the steaming mud with a successful DC 15 Swim check.

Creatures: The mud is home to a clutch of thoqquas arisen from the magma. The elemental beasts are territorial, and they attack any PCs who attempt to move through the area. Their arrival is presaged 1 round prior to attack by a sudden increase in local temperature and steam venting more violently around the PCs.

Thoqquas (6): hp 16 each; *MM* 242.

Tactics: The thoqquas burst up directly beneath the PCs, slamming and burning them. The creatures fight until half their number are slain, then retreat deep into the mud.

2: Steam Cloud (EL 8)

A sizable stream of pure cool water cascades down the staircase, meeting the hot mud at its base.

Light: Sunlight.

Sound: Cascading water, hissing steam (–4 penalty on Listen checks).

A cloud of steam sprays into the air where the cool water meets the simmering earth. While it is hot, the steam does not deal damage.

Creatures: The cloud is inhabited by a particularly mean-spirited group of steam mephits that enjoy nothing more than tormenting any creatures that wander too close to the citadel.

Steam Mephits (5): hp 13 each; *MM* 184.

Tactics: The mephits dart out of the steam to harry PCs with their breath weapons before disappearing back inside. The steam gives them concealment (20% miss chance) and fast healing 2. While safe inside the steam, they attempt to summon other steam mephits to increase their ranks before emerging to attack again.

3: TROLL STATUES (EL 6)

At the lip of the entranceway, three bronze statues of trolls stand at attention, arrayed in full battle dress with scale mail, shields, and wicked-looking bastard swords.

A stony cyclops guardian gives explorers pause at the entrance to a lost giant citadel

Light: Sunlight.

Sound: Flowing water, hissing steam from area 2 (–2 penalty on Listen checks), waterfall from area 5 (Listen DC 15).

As Martain approaches, he speaks loudly in Giant. Any PC who speaks this language understands his words as "I, servant of the storm, who treads on man and orc and reaches into the clouds, demand to pass." After he speaks, the characters can pass the sentinels unmolested. If any PC rushes ahead of Martain (who warns them against doing so), the statues animate and attack.

Creatures: The troll statues are guardians placed here long ago by the storm giant and cyclops masters of the citadel. They activate and attack any who pass without speaking the pass-phrase in Giant.

Troll Statues (3): hp 52 each; *MM* 14 (large animated objects). These statues' attacks deal 2d8 points of damage (large bastard swords).

Development: On the way out of the citadel, if Martain and the PCs have argued considerably over treasure gathered within, the explorer slips ahead of the group. He speaks the sentence for himself before exiting and leaves the PCs to contend with the statues, either to delay them or simply for his own amusement.

4: THE GREAT CYCLOPS KING (EL 6)

This main corridor is carved of obsidian. Its only feature is an enormous statue that stands at the mouth of the corridor. The monolithic statue is some 40 feet tall, fashioned into the likeness of a great cyclopean king.

Light: None.

Sound: Flowing water, waterfall from area 5 (automatic).

The fierce eye of the cyclops glares at approaching intruders. As the characters move forward, runes become visible on the statue's base. Written in Giant, they read "Gyrothrax, great one-eyed king! Bow your knees before his might, feel his power, and cower in your feebleness."

Anyone approaching closer than 10 feet sets off the eye of Gyrothrax, which fires an *enervation* ray at anyone passing under its watchful gaze. A DC 20 Search check allows an approaching PC to note pressure plates in the stone floor. A DC 26 Disable Device check neutralizes the trap, but only for 3 rounds.

Eye Ray Trap: CR 6; magic device; proximity trigger; automatic reset; *enervation* (+10 ranged touch, 1d4 negative levels, CL 15th); multiple targets (all targets within 10 feet of the statue); Search DC 20; Disable Device DC 26.

5: THE GREAT HALL (EL 10)

The majority of the citadel consists of this enormous room, nearly 200 feet wide at points and over 100 feet long. The ceiling looms 100 feet above the PCs' heads.

Light: None.

Sound: Waterfall (–10 penalty on Listen checks within 30 feet).

A giant waterfall flows from a large hole in the ceiling to fill a pool in the center of the room with cool, crystal-clear water. From the pool, a stream runs along the corridor and cascades down the steps, where it hits the mud field outside.

Beyond the waterfall, the great hall continues on, with two enormous open entryways on the west and east walls. A permanent *illusory wall* effect conceals another entryway in the back wall.

Any PC making a DC 10 Search check notes the presence of oversized skeletal footprints throughout the area, but these do not reveal any kind of path to area 9.

Creatures: Concealed among the pillars are the beginnings of Hegerin's undead giant army—three troll skeletons and an ettin skeleton. The undead are under orders to attack anyone who enters this area.

Troll Skeletons (3): hp 44, 39, 36; *MM* 227.

Ettin Skeleton: hp 66; *MM* 227.

Development: Any combat in this area alerts Gunter to the PCs' presence. He will not emerge from area 9 to investigate, but will be fully prepared for any intrusion.

6: THE WATERFALL POOL (EL 4)

This pool at the great hall's center contains one of the only pieces of valuable treasure unclaimed by intruders. Obtaining it is not without risk.

Light: None.

Sound: Waterfall (–20 penalty on Listen checks, speech not audible within 10 feet).

Creature: At the bottom of the frothy pool, some 60 feet down, lives a gelatinous cube deposited by the waterfall years ago. The cube subsists on river fish, otters, and snakes hurled over the falls, but it prefers more substantial meals. Unless a light is dropped into the pool, only creatures with 60-foot darkvision or better will be able to scan its depths. Any PC who can see to the bottom and succeeds on a DC 20 Spot check notices a glimmer of silver.

A DC 20 Swim check is required to enter the pool without being pulled beneath the punishing falls. Any PC who fails the Swim check takes 2d6 points of nonlethal damage and begins to drown. In the first round, he falls unconscious (0 hit points). In the following round, he drops to –1 hit points and is dying. In the third round, he drowns.

Approaching the silver glimmer, the PCs see a metal shape, but a DC 10 Spot check reveals that the item is suspended a full 5 feet above the pool's bottom. A check result of 15 or higher allows swimmers to see the gelatinous cube before they dive into it.

Gelatinous Cube: hp 52; *MM* 201.

Treasure: The item glimpsed from above is a *+1 shield of improved acid resistance* suspended within the cube. Its former owner came to an untimely end several years ago (along with all his other gear), but the acid-impervious shield remains lodged at the center of the cube's mass. The ooze must be defeated to remove the shield.

7: THE CYCLOPS SHRINE (EL 2)

This chamber was once a temple dedicated to an obscure cyclopean god.

Light: None.

Sound: Faint rustling of wings from above (Listen DC 20).

The chamber is filled with broken obsidian daises, and a giant-sized altar lies against the west wall. A large amount of foul-smelling greenish droppings litter the chamber floor.

Creatures: The only residents of this holy chamber are a swarm of bats. If disturbed by any loud noise, the resting bats swoop down to attack for 1 round before fleeing the citadel.

Bat Swarm: hp 16; *MM* 237.

8: HALL OF THE ANCIENT KING

This hall was the final resting place of a cloud giant king, one of the last rulers of the giant civilization that constructed this citadel.

Light: None.

On the walls, dead torches rot in enormous rusted brackets. The king's body was placed in reverent honor upon an obsidian throne that now stands empty against the east wall (the king's skeleton has been animated by Gunter and taken to area 9). Giant skeletal footprints are apparent in the dust on the floor to anyone who makes a DC 10 Search check. A DC 20 Search check reveals human tracks intermingled with them. Anyone with the Track feat can make a DC 15 Survival check to follow a trail back to the *illusory wall* in area 5.

Treasure: Unnoticed by past interlopers (presumably reluctant to clamber up on the enormous skeleton), the throne's backrest is set with eight Khyber dragonshards. Each is worth 750 gp. A DC 20 Search check is required to notice the shards from the ground, though any PC who ascends the throne (Climb DC 15) sees them immediately.

Martain does his best to claim these shards. The explorer's ego reels at the thought of his being able to speak of "wrestling dragonshards from the giant king himself."

9: HALL OF THE HONOR GUARD (EL 11)

Past the *illusory wall* at the rear of area 5 stands another large chamber.

Light: *Everbright lanterns*.

The personal guards of the ancient cloud giant king were interred here. This chamber houses row after row

of sarcophagi containing the remains of troll warlords, ettin sergeants, and giant bodyguards. Explorers long ago stripped all valuables from the sarcophagi. To Gunter Hegerin, however, the skeletons themselves are of much greater worth, and the necromancer has been hard at work amassing an undead force to unleash on Karrnath's enemies in Stormreach.

Creatures: Gunter has animated four troll skeletons to serve as a posthumous honor guard for the cloud giant skeleton he animated in area 8. As soon as the PCs enter the room, he orders the undead to attack.

Troll Skeletons (4): hp 43, 40, 39, 33; *MM* 227.

Cloud Giant Skeleton: hp 104; *MM* 227.

Gunter Hegerin: hp 22; see page 29.

Tactics: Unless the PCs have somehow managed to make it to this area without making any noise, Gunter will have cast *mage armor, shield, stoneskin, mirror image, greater invisibility,* and *displacement* on himself, if possible (in that order).

The undead are unsubtle opponents, wading into the fray and always attacking the first visible target. The necromancer supports his creations with spells, catching as many PCs as possible in the area of *waves of exhaustion* and *Evard's black tentacles*, and punishing foes with *shout*. He can hit opponents from a distance with *ray of exhaustion* and *ray of enfeeblement*, and can attack those enemies in melee range with *ghoul's touch* and *vampiric touch*.

During the battle, Gunter cannot help but taunt the PCs (potentially revealing his position to those unable to pierce his *greater invisibility*) with jibes such as "All this is for naught, for soon war will rage across Khorvaire again, and your lives will mean nothing." Or: "Ahhh, my little birds, I will change your lives forever. You will remember me always as you shamble among my legions of undead!"

Development: If Gunter is taken alive and brought before Ambassador Sedge Avadarrn aboard the *Golden Dragon* or at the Karrnathi embassy in Stormreach, the terrible conflict arising between Thrane and Karrnath is easily averted. The Emerald Claw is blamed for the death of Cardinal Menasos Bethenade, and Karrnathi forces might even begin collaborating with followers of the Silver Flame in an effort to root out the Emerald Claw. All this is up to the DM.

BACK TO THE SKIFF (EL 8)

After leaving the ruined citadel and returning to the skiff, the PCs and Martain find some uninvited guests hanging about the soarwood vessel.

Light: Sunlight.

Sound: Surrounding jungle noises (automatic), hidden warhorses moving (Listen DC 25).

The Situation: Halas Martain has made many enemies in his long and delinquent career. One of them has hired four House Tharashk bounty hunters to bring the explorer to Stormreach, where he can be punished for a number of transgressions.

Creatures: While two of the half-orcs hide among the trees with longbows at the ready, the other two are mounted on warhorses before the skiff, awaiting the PCs. The bounty hunters are in no mood for foolery, and they demand that Martain and the PCs stand down.

House Tharashk Bounty Hunters (4): hp 25 each; *ECS* 238.

Heavy Warhorses (4): hp 20 each; *ECS* 238.

Tactics: If the PCs decide to defend Martain, the bounty hunters leap into action. The two half-orcs in the underbrush fire on the PCs from cover while the others attack and their heavy warhorses pummel the PCs with their hooves. If necessary, the archers call their own warhorses from hiding before drawing their greataxes and charging the characters. The bounty hunters are dedicated professionals, and they fight until victorious or slain.

AFTERMATH

If the PCs capture Gunter alive or bring intelligence of his actions back to Stormreach, they earn the ever-deepening gratitude of Captain Alistair d'Lyrandar, who breathes easier knowing the Last War did not begin anew on his vessel.

If the PCs save Martain's skin, the scoundrel finds himself begrudgingly in their debt, and he might prove useful on future adventures. If the PCs allow the bounty hunters to haul Martain away to face the music, the explorer will definitely return to haunt them. Martain has survived giants, drow, and everything else Xen'drik has to offer. He will escape his captors before long, and he won't forget the PCs' decision.

If the PCs investigate the area after defeating the bounty hunters (or if they strike up a conversation after selling Martain out), they will discover that the half-orcs have been camped nearby for some time. If pressed, Halas admits to hearing rumors in Stormreach about former business associates getting word of his destination and promising that he would never reach it. He apologizes for somehow forgetting to mention this.

Part Four: Battle in the Clouds

After their exhilarating jaunt through Xen'drik's picturesque ruins, the characters return to the *Golden Dragon* docked at the Lyrandar airship tower in Stormreach. The PCs might have more business in Xen'drik's shrouded interior, or they might plan to return to Khorvaire. Either way, they must accompany the soarwood skiff back to the *Dragon*.

As always, the fates conspire to hurtle the PCs into harm's way. A drow druid and her clan, weary of Khorvairian intrusion on their native soil, attack the *Golden Dragon* shortly after the PCs return to the ship. The druid, Zolanta Vaazir, is well informed about the *Golden Dragon* and its status in Khorvaire. She intends to seize the ship, then use it for her clan's own ends against Stormreach.

Zolanta's spies in Stormreach have gathered all the information she needs to carry out her attack. She has managed to sneak several *charmed* animals and rapacious vermin on board using one of the *Dragon*'s newest guests—the gnome Pifagor Quelf, a Morgrave university professor on a specimen-gathering expedition.

The druid was originally outraged by the offer of the gnome's greasy gold in exchange for helping to ship Xen'drik's exotic wildlife back to Sharn. However, after learning that the professor intended to ship his prizes back aboard the *Golden Dragon*, her attitude shifted considerably. Zolanta even threw in what she claims is an authentic 7-foot-tall livewood idol worshiped by her people. In truth, the druid had the idol prepared for this occasion as a means of gaining access to the *Golden Dragon*'s secure cargo bay with a *tree stride* spell.

In this climactic episode of the adventure, the PCs face off against Zolanta, a group of fighters of her clan, and a powerful dragon ally of the drow.

Event 1: Meeting the New Passengers

Upon their return to the *Golden Dragon* in the late afternoon, the PCs are met in the skiff bay by Bosun Velgram Linntorm.

Sound: Nervous animals (–4 penalty on Listen checks in area 17).

The Situation: The jolly half-orc grins widely and embraces the PCs in a crushing hug before apologizing that the captain isn't here himself to greet them. Alastair is in Stormreach, as are all the passengers from the earlier voyage.

As the PCs emerge from area 18, they are assaulted by the wild sounds of the teeming jungle all over again. Locked tightly in secure cages all about the cargo bay are dire animals, constrictor snakes, and monstrous scorpions. Velgram's mood darkens as he explains:

"Cargo for some Morgrave bookworm—animals for the university. He calls 'em specimens, I call 'em a mess. Stink something fierce, too!" Even as the half-orc speaks, a gnome emerges from behind a cage, wearing spyglass-thick spectacles and a too-tight tunic that displays his unsightly paunch.

Professor Pifagor Quelf rushes to greet the PCs with a sweaty handshake, merrily assailing them with tales of his unexciting expedition. The gnome explains all about his helpful local guide Zolanta, and also proudly points out the ugly livewood idol she gave him to take home as a memento of the mysterious continent.

A nature-loving PC might want to loiter in the cargo bay and chat with the animals. Bosun Linntorn will tolerate this behavior for a few minutes, but then gently encourages the PC to leave, since ship rules prohibit passengers from staying in the cargo hold for any length of time. A character who stays in the cargo hold to observe the animals briefly can make a DC 20 wild empathy check to notice that they seem under the influence of some outside force (the *charm* spells Zolanta used on them).

Event 2: Chaos on Board (EL 7/7/6/8)

At sunset, Zolanta appears in the cargo bay, using *tree stride* to step out of the livewood idol she so graciously donated to Morgrave.

The Situation: The druid casts *longstrider, stoneskin, barkskin, bull's strength, eagle's splendor, owl's wisdom,* and *air walk* on herself. She then frees the four dire apes, two giant constrictor snakes, dire tiger, and eight monstrous scorpions caged in the bay.

Sound: Animals on the attack, screaming crew members (Listen DC 12 from anywhere on the same deck).

Development: The dire apes head for the main deck, crew members fleeing before them. The scorpions infest the House of Chance while the giant constrictor snakes start their own private party in the reception hall. The dire tiger prowls the cargo bay, waiting for anyone foolish enough to enter its territory.

The PCs are alerted to trouble when they hear Velgram scream from the cargo bay. By the time they arrive, they can also hear commotion from the decks above. Cries of "Snake!" and the hoots and bellows of the attacking apes seem to come from everywhere, and the tiger looks up from finishing off four Medani sentries as the PCs enter the area.

A character can catch sight of the drow druid Zolanta Vaazir as she slips out a cargo bay window by making a DC 15 Spot check. A PC scrambling after her will see her *air walk* to the main deck above and disappear from sight. The tiger, however, turns on the PCs and immediately attacks before they can see to Velgram.

Velgram lies unconscious against one wall, a severe gash across his face and chest. He has already become stable, and if he is revived, he can only tell the PCs that a drow woman leaped out of the totem and quietly opened the cages. He was conferring with the Medani guards about security for the animals, so he and the sentries only noticed that the animals were free when he heard her giving them orders to "Take to the ship, eat your fill, and slay the interlopers from Stormreach." Velgram also says he heard her mutter something to herself about "seeing to the helm now" once the animals were free. The last thing he remembers is the tiger leaping at him, its fangs bared.

If the PCs immediately head toward the bridge upon hearing this news, they should be assaulted at least once or twice by the scorpions or one or both giant constrictor snakes. Alternatively, if the encounter against Zolanta on the bridge is too easy for the characters, the scorpions or snakes could appear at an opportune time to turn the tide of the battle in favor of the drow.

Dire Apes (4): hp 35 each; *MM* 62. (EL 7)

Giant Constrictor Snakes (2): hp 65, 60; *MM* 280. (EL 7)

Medium Monstrous Scorpions (8): hp 15 each; *MM* 287. (EL 6)

Dire Tiger: hp 120; *MM* 65. (EL 8)

Development: This single event can spread into any area of the ship, depending on the PCs' response. The characters might even elect not to engage the creatures immediately, but to help crew members get off the *Dragon* first.

No matter where the PCs pursue the creatures, each encounter is made more difficult (or at least amusing) by Pifagor Quelf, who dogs the characters with cries of "Don't harm them! They are valuable specimens. You are ruining my research!"

Event 3: Battle for the Dragon (EL 12)

Zolanta uses the distraction her animal and vermin allies create to take control of the *Golden Dragon*.

Sound: Glidewings shrieking (Listen DC 15 from deck 2 or deck 3, automatic from the main deck), alarms from Stormreach as Syrkrazz is spotted (automatic).

The Situation: After *air walking* to the main deck, Zolanta directs the dire apes to storm the bridge, overpowering First Mate Mazzia and four crew members. (If some or all of the PCs are on the bridge, Zolanta directs all her efforts and spellcasting power at driving them off and seizing it.) She signals her compatriots awaiting in the clouds nearby with *animal messenger*, then shatters the airship's moorings as she takes to the sky. Any apes still standing at this point are ordered to guard the door against intruders.

Creatures: Six fighters of Zolanta's drow clan ride glidewing dinosaurs alongside Syrkrazz, a young adult white dragon who aids the dark elves. The dragon imagines that a bound-elemental ship the size of the *Golden Dragon* poses a serious threat to his intended dominion over Xen'drik's skies, and he hopes to watch the airship crash and burn.

Zolanta Vaazir: hp 56; see page 31.

Drow Fighters (6): hp 20 each; see page 32.

Glidewings (6): hp 20 each; *ECS* 280.

Syrkrazz: hp 148; *MM* 72.

Tactics: The drow glidewing riders take up positions off the port and starboard sides of the *Dragon*. If they spot an enemy, they swoop in to drag characters overboard with nets, or punish foes from a distance with their shortbows.

With a successful net attack, a target is entangled (*PH* 119). In the next round, each glidewing makes an opposed Strength check with an entangled character. If the glidewing wins the check, the character has been dragged over the closest edge of the deck.

In the same round when an entangled character has been dragged over the edge, the drow can release the net, letting the character fall to his doom. A DC 15 Strength check allows a character to grab hold of a glidewing's tack while plunging past the creature, while a subsequent DC 15 Climb check allows a character to pull himself up to the saddle to fight the drow rider. Note, though, that the glidewings are well trained, and *charmed* to obey their masters. If a drow is slain, its glidewing swoops onto the main deck, fiercely attacking any foes it finds.

Zolanta casts *call lightning* and *flame strike* on anyone attempting to break through to the bridge. She will use her *pearl of power* to recall one or the other of these spells.

Syrkrazz holds back for a few rounds to ascertain the characters' abilities before blasting them with *cone of cold.* If the PCs manage to reduce Zolanta to 25 hit points or fewer, she *air walks* out to Syrkrazz. There she harries the PCs with her sling while Syrkrazz blasts the deck with his breath weapon. Zolanta is willing to fight to the death for her cause, but Syrkrazz flees if reduced to 20 hit points or fewer.

Development: With no dragonmark, Zolanta knows that controlling an airship will take effort. Her plan is to circle the city while she gains altitude and speed, then head out toward the jungle where she will rendezvous with other members of her clan. Any passengers on

board are completely expendable to Zolanta. She will allow her animal friends to eat their fill until sated. Once she has control of the ship, any surviving drow fighters land on the main deck, round up any surviving NPCs (and PCs) in the cargo bay, and lock them in the cages once occupied by the animals. The journey into the deep jungle takes 2 hours, at which point a grisly fate awaits these survivors. Zolanta's clan plans to sacrifice them for the greater glory of Vulkoor once the *Golden Dragon* is docked.

Zolanta must make an opposed Charisma check each round to maintain control of the airship. (Though two bound elementals drive the ship, have her make just a single check; the elementals have a combined Charisma bonus of +2.)

Each round when Zolanta fails her check (or if she abandons the ship), the *Dragon* shudders and rolls, forcing all characters to make DC 10 Balance checks each round or fall prone. Characters within 5 feet of the edge of the main deck (or within 5 feet of the cargo bay doors, if those have been opened) who fail the check by 5 or more must also make a DC 15 Reflex save to keep from falling overboard.

To bring the ship to flying speed and sufficient altitude requires Zolanta to succeed on three checks in a row. Even with control of the helm, Zolanta doesn't have the sailing skill or the support of a crew necessary to pilot the *Dragon* with any degree of precision. Especially in the rounds when she doesn't have control, describe the airship turning erratically, clipping the edges of some of Stormreach's taller buildings, or plunging perilously close to the jungle canopy before climbing again. Her real goal is to get the ship's passengers and crew under control (or slain), then slowly make her way into the deeper jungles of the continent.

If Zolanta is driven from the bridge, as described above, she joins Syrkrazz. If the dragon is wounded enough to flee while she rides him, Volanta screeches in frustration at the creature and leaps from its back. She then *air walks* back to the ship and resumes the battle for the *Dragon* on deck. If she ever runs out of spells, Volanta doesn't hesitate to use her wild shape to assume a form capable of giving her an edge in melee (she favors the form of a dire lion, but is adaptable depending on the situation).

Once Zolanta is defeated, a PC at the helm can bring the *Dragon* to a halt with a simple mental command, or even attempt to pilot the vessel back to Stormreach with opposed Charisma checks. Alternatively, First Mate Mazzia d'Lyrandar is unconscious but stable at –3 hit points on the bridge, and she can be revived and made ready to fly by the use of any healing magic.

The Golden Dragon has more than a few surprises for these would-be hijackers

Concluding the Adventure

If the *Golden Dragon* still sails the skies (with the PCs aboard and intact) at this adventure's end, the PCs are always welcome on the ship. They have made enemies and allies along the way, gaining the attention of the Emerald Claw, the Sharn underworld, drow tribes, and Brelish military intelligence alike.

As the PCs come to know more of the *Golden Dragon*'s history, they might learn that the private concern financing its construction remains anonymous, even to the captain. Perhaps the *Dragon*'s owners have an agenda that will fuel further adventures—or ultimately put the PCs at odds with their unseen benefactors.

The possibilities for continuing the saga of the *Golden Dragon* are limitless. Argonnessen, Sarlona, the Demon Wastes, and a thousand other exotic locales brimming with wealth and danger await.

Appendix

Included below are the relevant statistics of the major NPCs featured in this adventure.

Captain Alastair d'Lyrandar
LG male half-elf expert 4/dragonmark heir 3
Relevant Skills Diplomacy +10, Profession (sailor) +16

Lieutenant Mazzia d'Lyrandar
LG female half-elf expert 3/dragonmark heir 2
Relevant Skills Diplomacy +7, Profession (sailor) +10

Ship's Bosun Velgram Linntorm
NG male half-orc expert 6
Relevant Skills Diplomacy +12, Intimidate +12, Profession (sailor) +8

Chief Artificer Manten Dramgrin
LN male dwarf artificer 5
Relevant Skills Craft (alchemy) +8, Disable Device +10, Knowledge (arcana) +6, Spellcraft +6

Torren Blackfingers
CN male gnome artificer 8
Relevant Skills Disable Device +11, Knowledge (arcana) +8, Knowledge (architecture and engineering) +8, Spellcraft +8, Use Magic Device +19

Zan
LN male changeling monk 3/expert 3 (currently disguised as an elf)
Relevant Skills Bluff +9, Disguise +12, Heal +9

Ambassador Sedge Avadarrn
LN male human expert 6
Relevant Skills Bluff +6, Diplomacy +12, Knowledge (nobility and royalty) +9, Knowledge (history) +8, Sense Motive +6

Cardinal Menasos Bethenade
LN male human cleric 5
Relevant Skills Diplomacy +5, Knowledge (religion) +8

Professor Pifagor Quelf
CG male gnome expert 3
Relevant Skill Knowledge (history) +6

Crew Members (8)
NG male half-elf expert 1
Relevant Skill Profession (sailor) +4

Telgin Char **CR 7**
Male human rogue 3/artificer 4
CE Medium humanoid
Init +3; **Senses** Listen +7, Spot +4
Languages Aquan, Common, Goblin

AC 17, touch 13, flat-footed 14
hp 32 (7 HD)
Resist evasion
Fort +3, **Ref** +9, **Will** +6

Speed 30 ft. (6 squares)
Melee mwk rapier +9 (1d6+1/18–20)
Ranged mwk light crossbow +9 (1d8/19–20)
Base Atk +5; **Grp** +6
Atk Options Combat Expertise, sneak attack +2d6
Combat Gear *oil of keen edge*, 2 *potions of cure serious wounds, potion of displacement, potion of gaseous form, potion of haste*

Abilities Str 12, Dex 17, Con 12, Int 16, Wis 13, Cha 10
SQ artificer bonus, artificer knowledge, disable trap, item creation, trapfinding, trap sense +1
Feats Brew Potion[B], Combat Expertise, Craft Wondrous Item[B], Exceptional Artisan[B], Lightning Reflexes, Nimble Fingers, Scribe Scroll[B], Weapon Finesse
Skills Appraise +3 (+5 traps or alchemy), Balance +7, Climb +7, Craft (alchemy) +8, Craft (trapmaking) +13, Disable Device +15, Escape Artist +16, Hide +11, Jump +5, Listen +7, Move Silently +10, Open Lock +15, Search +13, Spot +4, Use Magic Device +10 (+12 scrolls), Use Rope +6 (+8 bindings)
Possessions combat gear plus *+1 slick studded leather armor*, masterwork adamantine rapier, masterwork light crossbow with 10 bolts, 10 silver bolts, *+4 amulet of health, circle of sound,* backpack, hourglass, masterwork artisan's tools, masterwork thieves tools, warforged repair kit, workers uniform, large toolbox with false bottom (Search DC 20 to notice), pouch containing 5 silver spheres with *arcane marks* (50 gp each)

Hook "Kray . . . snap their bones."

Kray **CR 7**
Male personality warforged fighter 5/warforged juggernaut 2
LN Medium living construct
Init +0; **Senses** Listen +1, Spot +1
Languages Common

AC 20, touch 10, flat-footed 20

hp 66 (7 HD); **DR** 2/adamantine
Immune breathe, critical hits, poison, sleep effects, paralysis, disease, nausea, fatigue, exhaustion, effects that cause the sickened condition, energy drain, nonlethal damage
Resist light fortification, healing at half effect
Weakness unusual physical construction (*ECS* 23), cannot heal lethal damage naturally
Fort +10, **Ref** +1, **Will** +2

Speed 20 ft. (4 squares); 25 ft. when charging
Melee *+1 battleclaw* +11/+6 (1d8+7)
Base Atk +6; **Grp** +10
Atk Options armor spikes 1d6, charge bonus +1, expert bull rush (+6), Improved Bull Rush, Improved Sunder (+19), Power Attack, Powerful Charge
Combat Gear *potion of haste*, *potion of repair serious damage*

Abilities Str 19, Dex 10, Con 16, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 8
SQ does not need to eat or drink
Feats Adamantine Body, Improved Bull Rush, Improved Sunder[B], Power Attack, Powerful Charge[B], Weapon Focus (battleclaw)[B], Weapon Specialization (battleclaw)[B]
Skills Bluff –3, Climb +3, Diplomacy –3, Gather Information –3, Intimidate +9, Jump +4, Listen +1, Sense Motive –1, Spot +1, Survival +3
Possessions combat gear plus *amulet of natural armor +2*

Battleclaw Kray's battleclaw, created by Telgin, is similar to the warforged battlefist component, but deals slashing damage. In addition, the wielder of a battleclaw receives a +4 bonus on sunder attempts made with the claw, and can start a grapple as a free action after a successful attack.

Hook "Snap bones!"

Brimstone Brakker CR 6

Male hobgoblin barbarian 5/sorcerer 1
CE Medium humanoid (goblinoid)
Init +1; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Listen +5, Spot +1
Languages Common, Goblin

AC 18, touch 11, flat-footed 18; improved uncanny dodge, uncanny dodge
hp 59 (6 HD)
Fort +9, **Ref** +2, **Will** +6

Speed 40 ft. (8 squares)
Melee mwk adamantine warhammer +8 (1d8+2/×3)
Ranged throwing axe +6 (1d6+2)
Base Atk +5; **Grp** +7
Atk Options Point Blank Shot, rage 2/day (8 rounds)
Combat Gear 4 noxious smokesticks, 4 thunderstones
Sorcerer Spells Known (CL 1st):
1st (4/day)—*mage armor*†, *ray of enfeeblement*
0 (5/day)—*acid splash*, *detect magic*, *ghost sound*, *prestidigitation*
† Already cast once

Abilities Str 15, Dex 12, Con 16, Int 10, Wis 13, Cha 16
SQ fast movement, illiteracy, trap sense +1
Feats Great Fortitude, Iron Will, Point Blank Shot
Skills Climb +6, Craft (alchemy) +7, Craft (trapmaking) +5, Intimidate +11, Jump +6, Listen +5, Move Silently +5, Survival +3
Possessions combat gear plus +2 *buckler*, masterwork adamantine warhammer, *circle of sound*

Hook "This here airship is mine now, and you'll be shelling out a fortune to get her back."

When raging, Brimstone Brakker has the following changed statistics:
AC 16, touch 9, flat-footed 16
hp increase by 12
Fort +11, **Will** +8

Melee mwk adamantine warhammer +10 (1d8+4/×3)
Ranged throwing axes +6 (1d6+4)
Grp +9

Abilities Str 19, Con 20
Skills Climb +8, Jump +8

Sir Gedavin Brant and Dame Hollia Keln CR 4

Male and female human paladin 4
LG Medium humanoid
Init +4; **Senses** Listen –1, Spot –1
Aura courage (10 ft., +4 against fear), good
Language Common

AC 19, touch 10, flat-footed 19
hp 36 and 34 (4 HD)
Immune fear, all disease
Fort +8, **Ref** +3, **Will** +2

Speed 20 ft. (4 squares)
Melee mwk longsword +8 (1d8+3/19–20) or
Melee gauntlets +7 (1d3+3)
Base Atk +4; Grp +7
Atk Options smite evil 1/day (+2 attack, +4 damage)
Special Actions turn undead 5/day (+2, 2d6+3, 1st), lay on hands 8 points/day
Spell-Like Abilities (CL 4th):
At will—*detect evil*
Combat Gear *potion of cure serious wounds*

Abilities Str 16, Dex 10, Con 14, Int 11, Wis 9, Cha 14
Feats Improved Initiative, Improved Unarmed Strike, Weapon Focus (longsword)
Skills Concentration +4, Diplomacy +6, Handle Animal +4, Knowledge (nobility and royalty) +5, Knowledge (religion) +5, Listen –1, Ride +2, Sense Motive +2, Spot –1

Possessions combat gear plus masterwork full plate, masterwork light steel shield, masterwork longsword, holy symbol of the Silver Flame

Hook "The Flame guides us in all things."

Gunter Hegerin CR 9

Male human necromancer 9
CE Medium humanoid
Init +1; **Senses** Listen +1, Spot +1
Languages Common, Elven, Giant, Mabran, Undercommon

AC 11, touch 11, flat-footed 10
hp 22 (9 HD)
Fort +3, **Ref** +4, **Will** +7

Speed 30 ft. (6 squares)
Melee mwk dagger +5 (1d4/19–20)
Base Atk +4; **Grp** +4
Combat Gear *potion of cure moderate wounds*
Wizard Spells Prepared (CL 9th):
5th—*teleport, waves of fatigue*
4th—*Evard's black tentacles, greater invisibility, shout* (DC 18), *stoneskin*
3rd—*displacement, halt undead* (DC 18), *ray of exhaustion* (+6 ranged touch, DC 18), *vampiric touch* (2) (+4 melee touch)
2nd—*command undead* (2) (DC 17), *ghoul touch* (2) (+4 melee touch, DC 17), *misdirection* (DC 16), *mirror image*
1st—*cause fear* (DC 16), *mage armor, magic missile, ray of enfeeblement* (2) (+6 ranged touch), *shield*
0—*disrupt undead* (+6 ranged touch), *read magic, touch of fatigue* (3) (+4 melee touch, DC 15)
Abilities Str 10, Dex 12, Con 10, Int 18, Wis 12, Cha 16
SQ summon familiar (none currently)
Feats Brew Potion[B], Deceitful, Eschew Materials, Scribe Scroll[B], Skill Focus (Bluff), Spell Focus (necromancy), Weapon Focus (ranged touch)
Skills Bluff +12, Concentration +12, Decipher Script +9, Diplomacy +10, Disguise +8 (+10 acting in character), Forgery +10, Knowledge (arcana) +12, Knowledge (geography) +7, Knowledge (nobility and royalty) +9, Profession (scribe) +6, Spellcraft +12
Possessions combat gear plus masterwork dagger, plain black scribe's robes, sandals, sheafs of parchment, 2 doses of dark reaver powder, ruby necklace (200 gp value, focus for *magic jar*), maps of Xen'drik, calligraphy set, *wand of animate dead* (50 charges, only in Part Three of this adventure)
Spellbook spells prepared plus 0—all except enchantment and transmutation; 1st—*chill touch, detect undead, identify*; 2nd—*blindness/deafness, Melf's acid arrow*; 3rd—*dispel magic, halt undead*; 4th—*contagion*; 5th—*magic jar*

While possessing Menasos Bethenade's body with *magic jar,* Gunter's stats are as follows:
AC 15, touch 10, flat-footed 15
hp 25
Fort +4, **Ref** +3

Melee mwk heavy mace +6 (1d8+1)

Abilities Str 12, Dex 10, Con 12
Possessions: masterwork heavy mace, fine cotton robes embroidered with the symbol of the Silver Flame, holy symbol, silver snuff box (100 gp), 55 gp

Hook "Death is where you end and I begin."

Sea Baron Paldrith Malinko CR 9

Male human rogue 7/fighter 2
NE Medium humanoid
Init +4; **Senses** Listen +8, Spot +8
Languages Common, Sahuagin

AC 20, touch 14, flat-footed 20; Two-Weapon Defense, uncanny dodge
hp 51 (9 HD)
Resist evasion
Fort +6, **Ref** +9, **Will** +4

Speed 30 ft. (6 squares)
Melee *+1 keen shocking burst rapier* +12/+7 (1d6+3/15–20 plus 1d6 electricity and extra 1d10 electricity with critical hit) or
Melee *+1 keen shocking burst rapier* +10/+5 (1d6+3/15–20 plus 1d6 electricity and extra 1d10 electricity with critical hit) and
+1 elf bane dagger +10 (1d4+2/19–20)
Base Atk +7; Grp +9
Atk Options Combat Expertise, Improved Feint, sneak attack +4d6
Combat Gear *potion of cat's grace, potion of cure serious wounds*

Abilities Str 15, Dex 18, Con 12, Int 13, Wis 10, Cha 16
SQ trap sense +2, trapfinding
Feats Combat Expertise[B], Improved Feint, Iron Will, Quick Draw[B], Two-Weapon Defense, Two-Weapon Fighting, Weapon Finesse
Skills Balance +11, Bluff +13, Climb +6, Diplomacy +12, Escape Artist +14, Gather Information +9, Intimidate +15, Jump +9, Listen +8, Move Silently +9, Open Lock +9, Sense Motive +6, Spot +8, Tumble +16.
Possessions combat gear plus *+3 leather armor,* "Stormstrike" *+1 keen shocking burst rapier, +1 elf bane dagger, +2 cloak of Charisma,* fine green silk brocade jacket, red silk pants, fine stingray skin boots (150 gp), dragonhide belt with emerald buckle (300 gp), 10 silver spheres with invisible *arcane mark* (50 gp each), pouch with 162 gp

Hook The sea baron salutes each opponent he fells with: "Mind the boots! Spill your blood elsewhere if you please!"

Jackrin, Skrakes, and Meldin CR 3

Male human rogue 2/fighter 1
NE Medium humanoid
Init +2; **Senses** Listen +4, Spot +2
Language Common

AC 16, touch 12, flat-footed 14; Two-Weapon Defense
hp 20 (3 HD)
Resist evasion
Fort +3, **Ref** +5, **Will** +0

Speed 30 ft. (6 squares)
Melee mwk rapier +6 (1d6+1/18–20) or
Melee mwk rapier +4 (1d6+1/18–20) and mwk dagger +4 (1d4/19–20)
Base Atk +2; **Grp** +3
Atk Options sneak attack +1d6
Combat Gear *potion of cat's grace*

Abilities Str 12, Dex 15, Con 13, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 12
SQ trapfinding
Feats Two-Weapon Defense, Two-Weapon Fighting, Weapon Finesse, Weapon Focus (rapier)
Skills Balance +7, Bluff +3, Climb +4, Escape Artist +6, Hide +6, Intimidate +5, Jump +6, Listen +4, Move Silently +6, Spot +2, Swim +3, Tumble +7.

Possessions combat gear plus masterwork studded leather armor, masterwork rapier, masterwork dagger, boots, pouch with 2 silver spheres (50 gp each)

Hook "Me blade will make ye dance, boyo!"

Ship's Cook Jaeden Kovane — CR 6

Male human ranger 6
LN Medium humanoid
Init +2; **Senses** Listen +11, Spot +10
Languages Common, Halfling, Goblin

AC 12, touch 12, flat-footed 10
hp 34 (6 HD)
Fort +6, **Ref** +7, **Will** +6

Speed 30 ft. (6 squares)
Melee *+2 frost dagger* +11/+6 (1d4+4/19–20 plus 1d6 cold) or
Melee *+2 frost dagger* +9/+4 (1d4+4/19–20 plus 1d6 cold) and mwk dagger +8/+3 (1d4+1/19–20)
Ranged mwk dagger +10/+5 (1d4+2/19–20) or
Ranged mwk dagger +8/+3 (1d4+2/19–20) and mwk dagger +8 (1d4+1/19–20)
Base Atk +6; **Grp** +8
Atk Options Favored enemy (goblinoids +4, magical beasts +2), Point Blank Shot
Combat Gear 2 *potions of bull's strength*, 2 *potions of cat's grace*, 4 *potions of cure moderate wounds*, 3 *potions of mage armor*, *potion of shield of faith* +4
Ranger Spells Prepared (CL 3rd):
1st—*magic fang*

Abilities Str 15, Dex 14, Con 12, Int 15, Wis 14, Cha 10
Special Qualities animal companion, link with companion, wild empathy
Feats Endurance[B], Improved Two-Weapon Fighting[B], Iron Will, Point Blank Shot, Quick Draw, Track[B], Two-Weapon Fighting[B], Weapon Focus (dagger)
Skills Climb +6, Handle Animal +4, Heal +7, Hide +11, Jump +6, Knowledge (geography) +7, Knowledge (nature) +9, Listen +11, Move Silently +11, Profession (cook) +6, Profession (sailor) +5, Search +8, Spot +10, Survival +8 (+10 aboveground natural environments)
Possessions combat gear plus *+2 frost dagger*, 8 masterwork daggers, 2 doses *dust of disappearance*, 2 doses *dust of appearance*, 2 doses *dust of illusion*, chef's hat and apron, crew member's uniform and boots

Hook "Don't like the soup? Then head above deck for a tasty mouthful of fresh air!"

Lucius, Dog Companion — CR —

N Small animal
Init +3; **Senses** low-light vision, scent; Listen +5, Spot +5

AC 18, touch 15, flat-footed 14
Resist evasion
hp 19 (3 HD)
Fort +5, **Ref** +7, **Will** +2

Speed 40 ft. (8 squares)
Melee bite +3 (1d4+2)
Base Atk +0; **Grp** –3

Abilities Str 14, Dex 18, Con 15, Int 2, Wis 12, Cha 6
SQ two bonus tricks, link, share spells
Feats Alertness, Track[B]
Skills Jump +8, Listen +5, Spot +5, Survival +1 (+5 when tracking by scent)

Kalibar Jenks — CR 7

Male halfling rogue 7
LN Small humanoid
Init +3; **Senses** Listen +14, Spot +9
Languages Common, Halfling, Draconic, Elven, Giant, Goblin

AC 17, touch 17, flat-footed 17; uncanny dodge
hp 27 (7 HD)
Resist evasion
Fort +3, **Ref** +9, **Will** +6 (+8 against fear)

Speed 20 ft. (4 squares)
Melee *+1 finesse rapier* +10 (1d6+1/18–20)
Ranged mwk dagger +10 (1d4/19–20)
Base Atk +5; **Grp** +1
Atk Options Combat Expertise, Improved Feint, sneak attack +4d6
Combat Gear *potion of invisibility*

Abilities Str 10, Dex 16, Con 11, Int 18, Wis 15, Cha 16
SQ trap sense +2, trapfinding
Feats Combat Expertise, Improved Feint, Recognize Impostor
Skills Appraise +6, Bluff +12, Climb +4, Decipher Script +9, Diplomacy +13, Disable Device +9, Disguise +7 (+9 acting in character), Escape Artist +12, Forgery +11, Gather Information +14, Hide +10, Jump +4, Knowledge (local) +9, Listen +14, Move Silently +8, Open Lock +10, Profession (gambler) +9, Search +12, Sense Motive +11 (+15 to oppose Bluff checks), Sleight of Hand +10, Spot +9 (+13 to oppose Disguise checks)
Possessions combat gear plus *+1 finesse rapier*, *+3 ring of protection*, *gloves of arrow snaring*, joker from a *deck of illusions*, weighted dice, 4 masterwork daggers, fine (if garish) clothing and boots, pouch with 54 gp, 2 sapphires (200 gp each)

Hook "Care for a spin on the dragonwheel? C'mon, test the fates if you dare."

Zolanta Vaazir — CR 10

Female drow druid 9
CN Medium humanoid (elf)
Init +2; **Senses** darkvision 120 ft.; Listen +9, Spot +9
Languages Common, Drow

AC 20, touch 12, flat-footed 18
hp 56 (9 HD); **DR** 10/adamantine (max. 100 points)
Immune sleep, venom
Resist +4 on saves against spell-like abilities of fey; **SR** 20
Fort +7, **Ref** +7, **Will** +10 (+12 against spells and spell-like abilities)

Weakness light blindness

Speed 40 ft. (8 squares); woodland stride
Melee *+1 keen scimitar* +10/5 (1d6+4/15–20) or
Melee *+1 keen scimitar* +6/+1 (1d6+4/15–20) and *+1 whip* +6 (1d2+4 nonlethal)
Base Atk +6; **Grp** +9
Special Actions wild shape 3/day (9 hours, Large animal)
Combat Gear *potion of cure serious wounds*
Druid Spells Prepared (CL 9th):
5th—*stoneskin*†, *tree stride*†
4th—*air walk*†, *flame strike* (DC 20), *ice storm*
3rd—*call lightning* (DC 19), *cure moderate wounds*, *dominate animal* (DC 19), *greater magic fang*
2nd—*animal messenger*, *barkskin*†, *bull's strength*†, *eagle's splendor*†, *owl's wisdom*†
1st—*charm animal* (DC 17), *cure light wounds* (2), *longstrider*†, *speak with animals*
0—*detect magic*, *guidance*, *know direction*, *read magic*, *resistance*, *virtue*
† Already cast
Spell-Like Abilities (CL 9th):
1/day—*dancing lights*, *darkness*, *faerie fire*

Abilities Str 16, Dex 15, Con 12, Int 10, Wis 22, Cha 16
SQ trackless step, wild empathy +14 (+10 magical beasts)
Feats Exotic Weapon Proficiency (whip), Lightning Reflexes, Natural Spell, Two-Weapon Fighting
Skills Concentration +11, Diplomacy +5, Handle Animal +13, Heal +6, Knowledge (nature) +7, Listen +9, Ride +12, Search +2, Spot +9, Survival +9 (+11 in aboveground natural environments)
Possessions combat gear plus *+1 keen scimitar*, *+1 whip*, *+3 studded leather armor*, *pearl of power* (4th level, worn as earring)

Hook "Vengeance for my homeland is all I seek."

Drow Fighters — CR 4

Male drow fighter 3
CN Medium humanoid (elf)
Init +1; **Senses** darkvision 120 ft., Listen +3, Spot +3
Languages Common, Drow

AC 13, touch 11, flat-footed 12
hp 20 each (3 HD)
Immune sleep
SR 14
Fort +3, **Ref** +2, **Will** +2 (+4 against spells and spell-like abilities)
Weakness light blindness

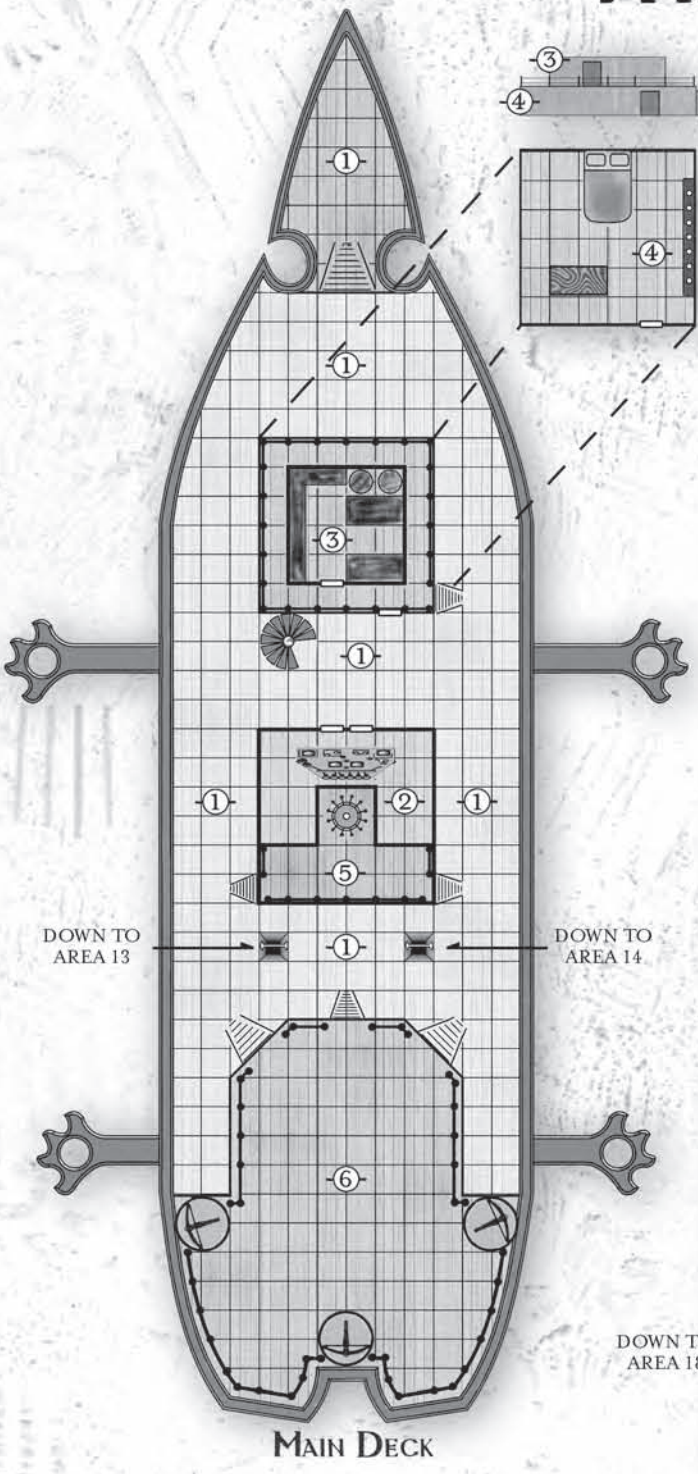
Speed 30 ft. (6 squares)
Melee mwk scimitar +6 (1d6+2/18–20)
Ranged mwk net +5 (special) or
Ranged mwk composite shortbow +6 (1d6+2/×3)
Base Atk +3; Grp +5
Atk Options Mounted Combat, Point Blank Shot
Combat Gear *potion of cure moderate wounds*
Spell-Like Abilities (CL 3rd):
1/day—*dancing lights*, *darkness*, *faerie fire*

Abilities Str 15, Dex 13, Con 11, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 10
Feats Exotic Weapon Proficiency (net), Mounted Combat, Point Blank Shot[B], Weapon Focus (shortbow)[B]
Skills Climb +3, Handle Animal +4, Jump +3, Listen +3, Ride +7, Search +2, Spot +3
Possessions combat gear plus masterwork studded leather armor, masterwork scimitar, masterwork net, masterwork composite shortbow (+2 Str bonus) with 40 arrows, boots, pouch with 2 gems (50 gp each).

Hook "Death from above!"

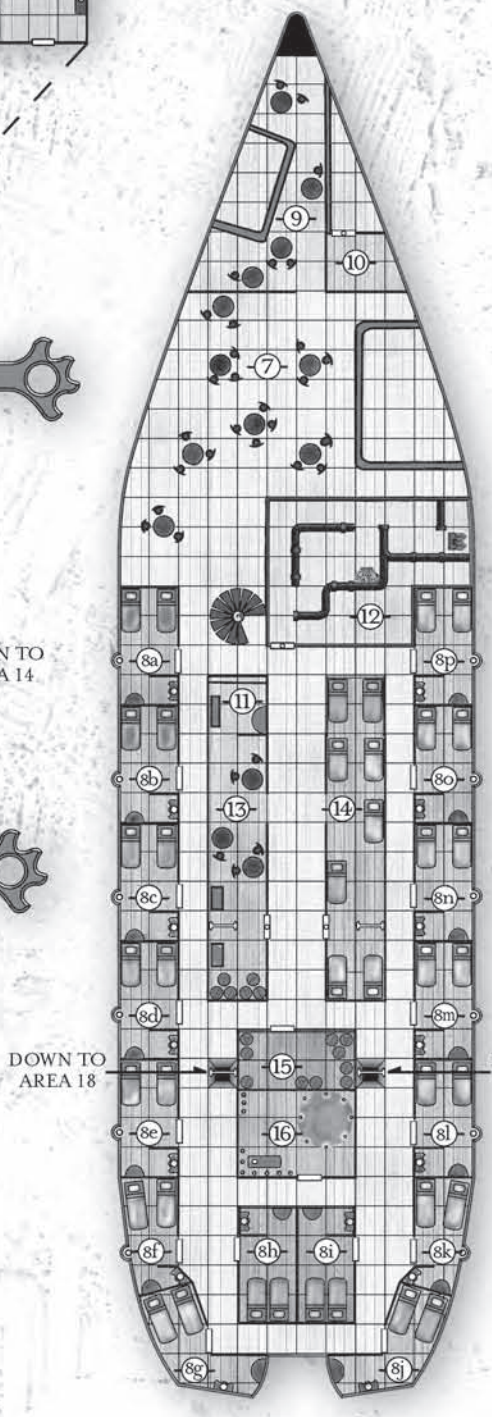
THE GOLDEN DRAGON

ONE SQUARE ≈ 5 FEET

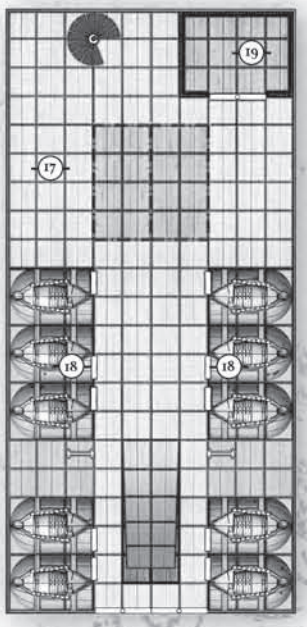


MAIN DECK

LOWER DECK



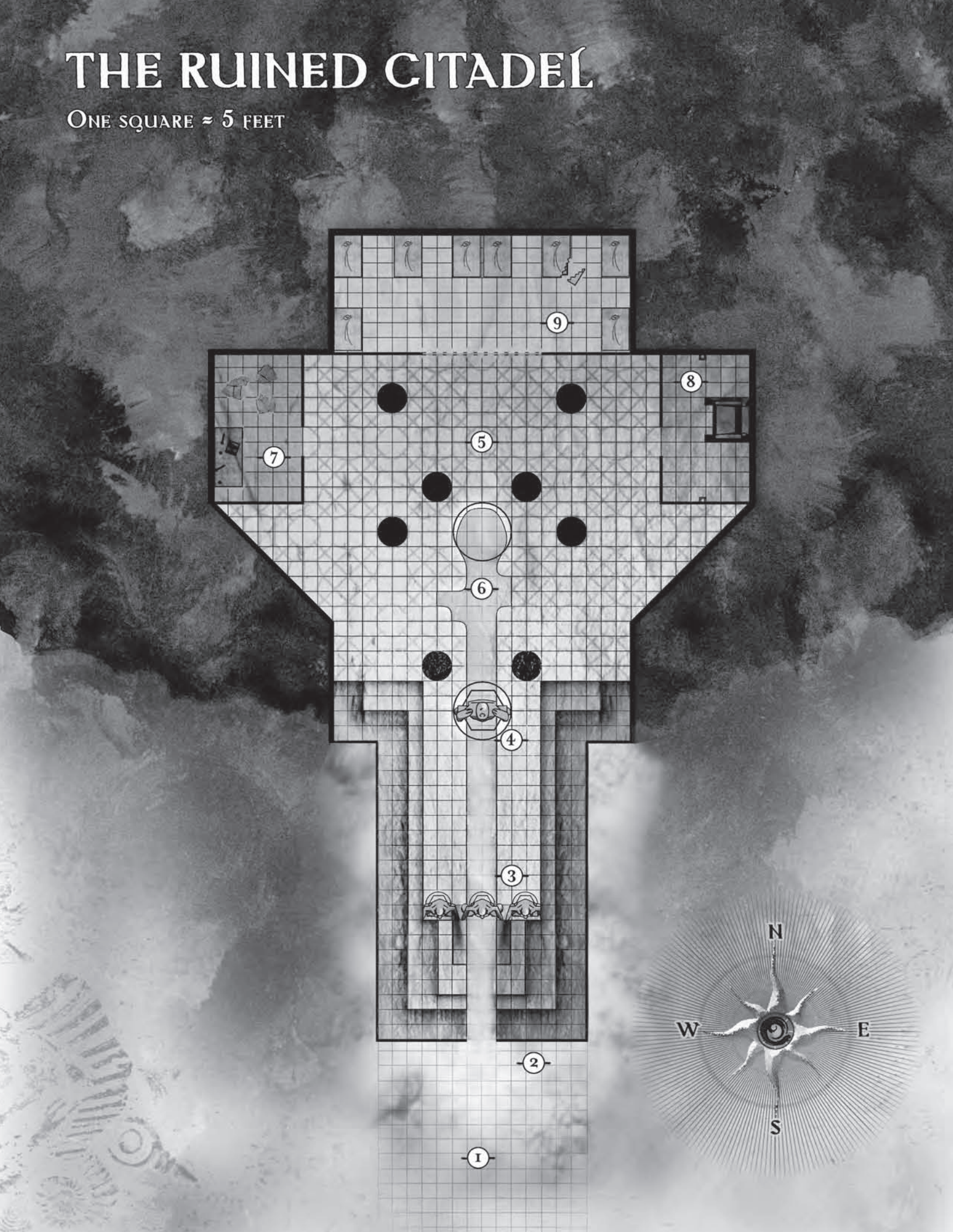
CARGO DECK



STAIRS
LADDER
PORTHOLE
DOOR
LOCKED DOOR

THE RUINED CITADEL

One square ≈ 5 feet



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